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CELTIC GLEANINGS.

Colin Stewart Thurso

CELTIC GLEANINGS;

OR,

NOTICES

OF THE

HISTORY AND LITERATURE OF THE SCOTTISH GAEL.

IN FOUR LECTURES.

BY THE

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A.M., F.S.A.S.

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PREFACE.

THESE Lectures were originally delivered in accordance with the following requisition :—

EDINBURGH, 28*th January* 1857.

REV. T. M'LAUCHLAN,

Reverend Dear Sir,

Being anxious to see some steps taken for the purpose of awakening an interest in our Celtic History and Literature, we earnestly request that you will, at as early a period as is convenient for you, undertake the delivery of a series of Lectures on the subject. Your doing so, will greatly oblige,

Your obedient servants,

John Duncan, LL.D.
P. C. Macdougall, Professor of Moral Philosophy.
Ken. Macqueen, H.E.I.C.S.
Kenneth M'Donald, student.
John Kennedy, do.
H. L. M'Kenzie, do.
Donald Munro, do.
R. S. Macaulay, do.
Thos. Macdonald, student.
J. S. Blackie, Professor of Greek.
Archibald M'Neill, W.S.
Duncan M'Callum, C.E.
Angus Macgregor, student.
John Makeracher, do.
Donald M'Kenzie, do.
Charles Gordon, do.

W. S. Swanston,	student.	A. M'Rae,	student.
Donald Forbes,	do.	John Wishart,	do.
Alexander Stewart,	do.	Alex. Macgregor,	do.
Andrew M'Gregor,	do.	Donald Ross,	do.
Kenneth M'Donald,	do.	John A. Stewart,	do.
Donald M'Master,	do.	James Ross,	do.
Charles M'Keracher,	do.	Robert Telford,	do.
James Ross,	do.	James Menzies,	do.
Hugh M'Leod,	do.	John M'Gregor,	do.
Murdoch Corbet,	do.	Kenneth Kerr,	do.
Isaac MacKay,	do.	John Matheson,	do.
Alexander Robertson,	do.	Alexander Ross,	do.
Donald M'Rae,	do.	John Ross,	do.
John Fraser,	do.	George Mackay,	do.
Donald M'Rae,	do.	D. M'Corkindale,	do.
Daniel Forbes,	do.	G. L. Campbell,	do.
Alex. Matheson,	do.	George Black,	do.
J. Blacklock,	do.	William Murray,	do.
Norman M'Donald,	do.	William Fraser,	do.
Alex. M'Lean,	do.	Walter Ross,	do.
James Macswein,	do.	James Cruickshank,	do.
D. T. Sage,	do.	John Mackay,	do.
Duncan Dewar,	do.	George Mackay,	do.
William Masson,	do.	D. M'Lean,	do.
Donald Sutherland,	do.	Donald M'Donald,	do.
James Doull,	do.	James Matheson,	do.
Angus Mackay,	do.	Duncan Davidson,	do.
Alex. Finlayson,	do.	John Finlayson,	do.
Neil P. Ross,	do.	Alexander Chisholm,	do.

The above is given as accounting for the precise character of the Lectures. They were prepared for Students, and were intended more for the purpose of giving their minds a direc-

tion with regard to subjects of historical and archæological research, than supplying them with all necessary information. We earnestly hope that they may be taken just for what they profess to be. There is little in the way of close discussion and producing of authorities ; but as is usually the case with popular lectures, the author gives the results of his own observation and that of those whom he believes competent to give a judgment in such questions. One thing will afford him pleasure in connexion with these Lectures, even if there should be nothing else ; that is, if he has aided in any measure in forming an interested public before which questions appertaining to the Celtic races may be discussed. That he believes to be essential to their being discussed at all, at least with any measure of success.

The Lectures are now published at the request of the original requisitionists.

LECTURE I.

ETHNOLOGICAL RELATION OF CELTIC AND SAXON RACES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.—FORMS OF THOUGHT, &c., PECULIAR TO THE CELTS.

THE population of Europe is well known to be made up of several distinct races. The chief of these, in the apparent order of their seniority, are,—the Finnish, the Celtic, the Teutonic, the Sclavonic, and the Turkish. Two of them only can be shown to have penetrated into the British Isles,—the Celtic and the Teutonic, although ethnologists of no mean name have maintained that there are distinct traces found in Great Britain of the existence of a Finnish race. But if such a population ever did exist, they have long since passed away, having no memorial save in their stone cists and burial urns, and leaving the land which was once theirs to be occupied by races of more vigour and enterprise than themselves. At the present time these Islands, which constitute the United Kingdom, are,

speaking generally, occupied by the two races we have specified—races between which for ages there would appear to have existed a powerful rivalry, and between which that rivalry has hardly yet ceased; at least there would appear to lurk still in the breast of both the Celt and the Saxon somewhat of the ancient antagonism—as much as is sufficient to remind us that it existed once in greater force.

And yet we would be doing injustice to the spirit of the age, did we deny that there never was a time when the discussion of such questions—with respect to their history and literature—as may arise between the Celt and the Saxon, was more likely to receive a candid and impartial hearing than the present. There may still be minds sufficiently sectional and narrow to be biassed in all such questions by petty national predilections—predilections which stand out widely apart from real patriotism; but a great change has unquestionably passed over the mind of the literary public since the beginning of the present century. Then, it was vain to bring any statement bearing upon the claims of the Celtic races before that public at all. The party doing so was treated as unworthy of the common courtesies

of life, and had his statements met, not with arguments, but with sneers. Any man who reads the strictures of Dr Samuel Johnson, or of John Pinkerton, or Malcolm Laing, will require no farther proof of this; and assuredly never did there exist men who, in one important aspect of it, were less qualified for entering on the controversy they raised and maintained than these men, although their judgment was, and in some measure is, received by the British public as the announcements of an oracle. Strange that so much weight should be attached to the criticisms of men on a language and a literature, of which language and literature they were totally ignorant, except through the medium of a translation, and who had not even the qualification of being, in any measure worth speaking of, acquainted with the character and habits of thought of the people whose language and literature they were criticising. Yet it was so, and in perfect accordance with this is the fact still existing, that this kind of ignorance is thought to be no disqualification for the exercise of criticism in the same direction —rather the reverse. It would be interesting to know how much weight the *literati* of continental Europe would be disposed to attach to the speculations of that man on the subject of the lan-

guage and literature of either Greece or Rome, who knew nothing of the one, and knew the other only through a translation. Germany has pronounced her opinion with sufficient emphasis on the treatment which the claims of Celtic literature have received at the hands of the public of England. But a better spirit is abroad in our land. Men are less disposed than formerly to listen to mere dogmatism, a fairer spirit exists, and the time seems come when what can be said on the subject of Celtic literature or history should be said, and may be said, without there being much reason to dread the strictures of a prejudiced or unfair criticism.

In entering upon our subject, let us pass briefly under review the two races which have been said to constitute the population of these islands. And let it be here observed, that although we speak of Celtic and Saxon races generally, there is no reason to believe that we possess any perfectly pure race. Assuredly we cannot claim perfect purity for our Celtic races. In casting the eye backward over the past history of the Scottish Highlands, it is obvious that we cannot have a race of a type perfectly pure, and claiming to be Celtic. At different periods the original population of the land

must have received a large admixture of foreign blood. Putting aside at present the question of who the Picts were, whether Celts or Teutons, with whom the Scots must have largely intermingled; we have from the ninth century downwards the constant irruption into the north of Scotland of Scandinavian invaders; and that, not merely as invaders, but as settlers and possessors of the soil. For four hundred years did these continue their occupation, a period about equal in duration to the existence of the Roman power in Britain. They founded a powerful monarchy in the Isle of Man, embracing under its sway the whole Hebrides, together with the promontory of Kintyre. Indeed, at one time the whole of Scotland north of the Frith of Forth was subject to them, with the exception of a portion of the counties of Argyle and Perth. Their hordes were continually pouring into the country, making settlements; and no doubt after a while, when the earlier animosities were quieted, intermarrying with the natives. That such important occurrences should have left no traces on the after condition of the country and its population it is impossible to conceive. In fact we know it to be otherwise. One-half of the names of places on the west coast of Scotland are

Scandinavian; some clans, such as the M'Leods and M'Aulays of Lewis, claim to be of Scandinavian descent, with what truth I know not, although that the existence of Scandinavian blood occurs there to a large extent cannot be doubted; and there are few parts of the North and West Highlands where either among the traditions of the people, or the ruins that add so much to the picturesque beauty of the country, something may not be found that speaks of the past existence and power of the sons of Denmark and Norway. It is, perhaps, not beyond the mark to say, that one-third of the blood of a large proportion of the inhabitants of the Western Isles is Scandinavian.

Subsequent to the period of the Danish or Norwegian power in the Highlands, was the introduction of the Normans. It is perhaps hardly apprehended now to what an extent a Norman influence extended into that portion of the country at an early date. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Cheynes and the Federeths possessed very large portions of the counties of Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross; the Cardines of Foss were extensive landowners in Perthshire; the Cummings were the most powerful sept in the whole north of Scotland, having for their territory Lochaber

and the country on both sides of the Spey, from its source to the borders of Banffshire. Then there were and are the Menzieses of Perthshire, a branch of the Norman family of "Manners," represented in England by the Duke of Rutland, and having the original form of the word preserved in the Gaelic "Meinearach." Then there are the Gordons, the Frasers, the Chisholms, and sundry minor clans, all without any trace of a connection with the Celts, and originally, without doubt, of purely Teutonic blood. These families possessed large sections of what is now called the Highlands, and formed continual intermarriages with the natives. I am aware that it is maintained, that while many of these families possessed feudal charters, these charters were altogether invalid; that they were given merely for the purpose of introducing feudal tenures among the Celtic population, and that, side by side with these, the ancient possessors retained, without molestation, the ownership of the soil. This cannot be true of most of the Norman families mentioned above. The Gordons and the Cummings are known to have possessed their territory, and wielded a vast power in the land.

It is, then, hardly possible to estimate the extent to which the admixture of both Danes

and Normans, for a period of ten centuries, affected the purity of the Celtic races; but it is vain to deny that it must have done so to a large extent. At the same time it may be quite true that, with regard to the latter, their presence affected to a very small extent the general mass of the population ethnologically. They consisted of a few leading families, whose marriages would have been into families of equal rank with their own.

That there are clans, however, which, notwithstanding the qualifications implied in the above remarks, may with perfect propriety be called Celtic, requires little demonstration. No race is more truly so than the Campbells, notwithstanding all that has been said of their great ancestor, the Norman "de Campobello." Carsewell, the Superintendent of the Isles in the reign of Queen Mary, in his dedication of his Gaelic translation of Knox's "Prayer-Book" to the then Earl of Argyll, has preserved what was known as the Gaelic surname of the family. He addresses the Earl as "An triath cumhachdach, ceart-bhreathach, ciùin-bhriathrach, Gilleasbuig Ua-Duibhne Iarla Earraghaidheal." "The powerful, just, and mild Archibald O'Dùine, Earl of Argyll." The real patronymic of the family is O'Dùine; nor do Highland ge-

nealogists of any authority allow of its having been exchanged for another. Equally Celtic are the M'Donalds, the descendants of Colla Uais, with their different offshoots, the M'Dougalls, M'Queens, M'Ranalds, M'Intyres, and others, having their later descent from the great Somerled, thane of Argyll. The clan Alpin, as indicated by their supposed descent from a Scottish King, are a Celtic race. They embrace the M'Gregors, the Grants, the Macnabs, the Colquhouns, the M'Kinnons, and other minor septs. The different branches of the Catti possess the same distinction. They embrace all those septs which have the cat as their emblem, —including the Sutherlands, although attempts have been made to prove them Teutons,—the Mackintoshes, M'Phersons, M'Gillivrays, and a host of other septs. The Stewarts are in all probability Celts, whose original seat was in Galloway, one of the most Celtic portions of Scotland. The M'Kenzies are Celts, having, no doubt, their supposed descent from one of the Irish Fitzgeralds,—a descent, however, not borne out by any documentary evidence of the smallest value. We have little hesitation in averring that there were M'Kenzies in Scotland ere ever a Fitzgerald set foot in Ireland. The Camerons, M'Leans, M'Niells, M'Kays, Rosses,

Munroes, Duffs, Farquharsons, Forbeses, Robertsons, and numerous other clans, are unquestionably Celtic, occurring, as most of their names do,—as, for instance, the Munroes and Forbeses,—in some of the earliest documents connected with Irish history. But it is needless to specify any farther. We have had a large admixture of foreign blood in the Scottish Highlands; while we are perfectly safe still in speaking of the great mass of the inhabitants as a Celtic race.

But let us now take a glance at our Anglo-Saxon neighbours, from whom, of late years, we have been called to listen to such loud claims of superiority over their Celtic brethren. What foundation there exists for these claims we shall perhaps see; but they have certainly been stated often enough and loudly enough. Reviews, newspapers, popular lectures, all teem with the incomparable excellencies of the Anglo-Saxon; and the Celt, who is favoured with this peculiar self-laudation very much at his expense, while perhaps moved with a measure of indignation, is almost stunned into acquiescence with what he finds is a very general and popular belief. Nor is this confined to one side of the Atlantic. America rings with the glory of the Anglo-Saxon. In an article which lately

appeared in one of the popular Reviews of the United States, an attempt has been made to show that not above one-twentieth of the inhabitants of the Union are Celtic ; and no small boast is made of the result of the demonstration. It is indeed a very popular belief that there is some peculiar excellence about the Anglo-Saxon character. To be an Anglo-Saxon is, in the eyes of many, to be a being of a superior order altogether. Amazing intellect ! as if every Anglo-Saxon were a Socrates. Amazing energy ! as if every Anglo-Saxon were a sort of walking steam-engine. Tremendous solidity ! as if every Anglo-Saxon were as immoveable as Snowdon or Schiehallion ! It would appear as if everything great and good in this land of ours were due to its Anglo-Saxon connections ! Let us just look at these claims from a Celtic stand-point, and examine a little into their worth, and I am sure our brethren will excuse us if we deal as freely with them as they have done with us in the matter.

Let it be observed, then, that the very name Anglo-Saxon is a thing of yesterday. In fact, our neighbours do not find it easy to fit themselves with a name. For a long period they were Saxons, a name now well-nigh obsolete, save in the vocabulary of the Celt. Then they

became Goths, a name under which Pinkerton fought many a fierce and bloody battle on their behalf. Then they suddenly became Anglo-Saxons, and from that they are passing into Teutons. What they will be before all is over it is hard to say. Who knows but our good friends may become Celts; and that after all our battles, we may have to shake hands with them as a kindred race. And if they do find a difficulty in fitting themselves with a name, it is no wonder, for they find considerable difficulty in fitting themselves with an origin. Who are these Anglo-Saxons, and whence came they? The fact is, nobody knows. What is said is, that about the year 449 A.C., two buccaneers, of the names of Hengist and Horsa (if ever such men did exist), made their appearance from the opposite continent on the shores of England. They called themselves, or were called, Saxons; and yet it is hardly possible that they came from what is now called Saxony, a country lying in the very heart of Europe, and separated by a wide expanse of territory from the shores of the German Ocean. It may be that the name Saxony then extended over the country now called Belgium and Holland, and gave these invaders, or marauders, or adventurers, or whatever we choose to call them, their name. These men

and their successors founded what were called the Saxon kingdoms of England; and yet, strange to say, they did not give to England its name, else why is it not Saxony or Saxonland? Another race would seem to have crossed the German Ocean, and to have given its name to the land. These were the Angles. They are said, with what truth it is hard to say, to have come from a small island on the north-east coast of Jutland, the inhabitants of which retain the name of Angles to the present day. But of all this there is no certainty. All that can be said of the origin of the Anglo-Saxon race is that they were drawn from the shores of the opposite continent, and that the Anglo-Saxon of England is first cousin to the Dane or the Dutchman.

If the Celt is to claim kindred with his brethren on the European continent, he must find his way farther south, where a brother Celt is found to occupy the sunny plains of France. The Celtic origin of the French is maintained by the French themselves. Their alliance of old with the Scots is said to have been founded on affinity of blood. Not that the French can be said to be unmixed Celts; but the Frenchman is as much a Celt as the Englishman is a Saxon. If the blood of the

Roman, the Frank, the Hun, and the Visigoth, be mingled with that of the Celt in France, it is not in larger proportion than that in which foreign blood exists in Saxon England. And taking the two races in Great Britain with their cognate races on the continent of Europe, I do not see any well-founded call upon the Celt to admit the superiority of the Saxon. I would as soon claim kindred with the genius of France as with that of Holland. I would as soon claim kindred with the intellect of France as with that of Germany. I would as soon be the countryman of Calvin as of Luther. I would as soon claim kindred with a Pascal or a Massillon as with a Strauss or a Hegel. Celtic France has done as much for literature and science as Teutonic Austria. I would as soon say brother to the ardent Celt of France as to the cooler and less impulsive Teuton of Saxony or Prussia. I would as soon claim kindred with the brilliancy of the Irishman as with the solid weight of a Dutchman or a German. And why do we say this? Is it for the purpose of meeting the Anglo-Saxon with counter claims on the part of the Celt similar to his own? Far from it, but in order to show the fallacy and absurdity of the whole doctrine of race in the extreme to which it has been pushed, and to aid

in bringing the men who have so pushed it back to the sounder doctrine, that "God made of one blood all the nations of the earth." And it might, perhaps, be unnecessary to do this, at least men might be allowed to indulge in their own ideas on the subject, were it not that these ideas are far from harmless. It cannot be doubted that certain views on the subject of ethnological distinctions, have entered into the treatment which the Celtic race has received both in Britain and Ireland. In the Scottish Highlands these form, undoubtedly, one of the arguments made use of to defend a system leading to the rapid extirpation or extradition of the native population. It is vain to attempt concealing that there are parties, and parties possessed of leading influence in many portions of the country, who cherish the belief that it would be well to be rid of them ; and hence, instead of efforts for their social improvement, we hear of little else throughout their territory but summonses of ejection, having in view their removal from the land. In Ireland no pen can rightly describe the misery to which this antagonism of race has led. A writer, holding decided Protestant principles, will not be readily accused of sympathizing with much that is characteristic of the native Irish. He is not likely to

have much sympathy with their religion, and little with their lawlessness. Yet he cannot shut his eyes to the truth regarding them. That their rulers have often received grievous provocation at their hands none can deny. No man can approve the atrocities of 1641 or of 1798. But, then, have we ever looked at the other side of the account? Without doing so we cannot judge fairly of the state of the case. In a little volume of Irish poems, published in Dublin a few years ago, the following note appears, and as the facts are given on the authority of Leland and other credible parties, and as the summary is put in a few words, it is quoted here. "Since the arrival of the English in 1169, the native Irish have suffered much for political and religious offences. They have been massacred, tortured, starved to death, burned, broiled, flayed alive, sold to slavery, compelled to commit suicide, and to eat human flesh. In one century, their properties were four times confiscated. They were forbidden to receive education at home or abroad. Their language, dress, and religion were proscribed, and their murder only punished by fine. They were declared incapable of possessing any property, and finally compelled to pay large sums to their worst oppressors." In the seventeenth

century their total extirpation by massacre was strongly advocated in England. If such be the result of antagonism of race, along, no doubt, with other influences, is it not well to use every measure that may possibly aid in removing that antagonism, and doing away with false and unfounded impressions that would seem to foster it.

But, as essential to Celtic history, let us consider fairly of what elements the population of England is composed. Let us trace that noble edifice,—for a noble edifice it is,—from its base upwards. And, I presume, no ethnologist will be disposed to deny that the lowest course in it is a purely British one; or, to change our metaphor, that the lowest stratum in the population of England is Celtic. Britons, represented by the modern Welsh, inhabited England when first invaded by the Romans under Julius Cæsar, upwards of half a century before Christ. We do read in Roman authors of the *Littus Saxonicum;* but the Saxon inhabitants of that region occupy no place of any prominence in the pages of the early writers. That Britons formed the larger portion of the inhabitants of Britain during the Roman occupation, is also a statement that cannot be gainsaid. We do not learn that there was Roman immigration

into Britain, save that of the army. In fact, the Romans were conquerors, not colonists. And we have no reason to believe that they extirpated the native Britons. If they did so, it was a proceeding at complete variance with their usual policy in similar circumstances. The only instance of the dispersion of a people by them was that of the Jews, and the reasons which led to this were altogether singular. We have not one Roman author from whom we can gather that there was either the extirpation or dispersion of the British people during the occupancy of his countrymen. They would appear to have settled down quietly under the Roman government, and to have become orderly and loyal citizens, swelling to no inconsiderable extent the ranks of the Roman legions. Nor could their numbers have been inconsiderable. The length and fierceness of their struggle with the Roman power indicate the existence of a numerous and energetic people. From 60,000 to 70,000 men are related to have fallen in a single battle in this conflict. In the reign of Boadicea, the Britons seem to have been capable of bringing an almost unlimited number of men into the field, and we know that afterwards the Roman government suffered some sections of the native population to settle down under the

rule of their own kings. Here, then, we have the substratum of the population of England a British or Celtic one, and upon this we find next a Roman one superinduced. These two form the first two courses in the edifice; and, if I am not mistaken, the second of these is, in many respects, the most important of the whole. I am disposed to maintain that the Romans, so far as the influence of race had to do with it, exerted a far more powerful influence on the civilization of England than was ever exerted by the Saxons. Everything that archæology is revealing of the state of Roman Britain, indicates an advanced state of civilization,—at least in all that appears to belong to the physical comfort of a people. Nor does this civilization appear in any way to have been aided, but rather the opposite, by the introduction of the Saxons. These latter would seem to have partaken gradually of the civilization of Britain, and not to have communicated their own. They came, drawn, no doubt, by the superior wealth of the country as compared with their own, and were encouraged by the state of weakness in which they found the native population. And yet some men trace to this irruption of the Saxons the civilization of the British empire. Nothing can be more completely un-

founded. Britain owes much, as has been said, to the Romans; but there was also another influence that began to act shortly after the coming in of the Saxons, to which, above everything else, we owe our present state of social advancement,—an influence, the appearance of which being almost contemporaneous with the Saxon invasion, has been, in the estimation of superficial inquirers, lost sight of in that of the latter;—I mean the influence of Christianity. This is the fountain whence has flowed the civilization of modern Europe; to this England owes almost all that distinguishes her as a nation. We have yet to learn to what extent an invasion of pirates is calculated to promote civilization.

The third course in the edifice we have been contemplating is undoubtedly the Saxons; and an important contribution to its strength they were. They were brave men; men accustomed to face danger, whether by sea or land; men of brawny arms and indomitable resolution,—hungry, vigorous marauders, who found a good land; and though called in merely to help their neighbours in an extremity, found, like others in similar circumstances, that while it might be a good thing to help their neighbours, it was a better thing to help themselves. They had also strong sympathies with liberty: men accus-

tomed to a life like theirs usually have ; though, perhaps, they had as much at least with their own as with that of others—a species of weakness, if it may be so called, by no means uncommon. These invaders at once took a leading place among the Britons, enervated by their connection with Roman luxury and their dependence on Roman protection ; but that they extirpated the Britons is hardly to be conceived. Their number, as compared with the Britons who inhabited the land, must have been small. But while such was the case, they became the head, while the Britons were merely the hands. Over the whole kingdom, with the exception of Wales, they became the masters, like the Magyars of Hungary, while the Britons became the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. The Saxons, from their position, influenced powerfully the language of the nation ; indeed, between the Romans and themselves, they were able almost wholly to put the original British language aside, and to supplant it by a language made up almost altogether of both their own. Yet, while that is true, there is no reason for supposing that the original population was extirpated by the Saxons any more than by the Romans. There may have been a considerable immigration of Celts into Brittany ;

although nothing can be more unsatisfactory than the attempt to account in this way for the Celtic population of Brittany. Nations do not emigrate in this mode *en masse*. But, that the large body of the original inhabitants in England continued still to occupy the land, is consistent with all analogy on the subject, and cannot be shown to be inconsistent with historical evidence. Hence it may safely be inferred that the British element so far as blood is concerned, was at that period a leading element in the population of England, and that it continues to be so to the present day.

The last course in our edifice is the Normans. They seem chiefly to have given a king and a nobility to the land, and to have affected it ethnologically only to the extent that such an immigration could.

We have thus glanced at the different races which compose the population of Britain. In the term England we have embraced the Scottish Lowlands, although, perhaps, the Teutonic population here was drawn from a more northern source. The Lothians and Northumberland, as well as large sections of the north-east coast of Scotland, seem to have drawn, to a great extent, for their population upon Denmark and Norway; these, however, are equally Teutons with the

southern Saxons, and may therefore be looked upon as the same people.

But let us now pass from the question of race to some other things that are more permanent than even race, although closely connected with it in their origin. I mean ideas: forms of thought branching out into peculiar customs, forms of government, and such like. There are forms of thought that are peculiarly Saxon, and there are forms of thought that are peculiarly Celtic. These often remain unchanged, even when the races intermingle or pass into each other. The forms of thought which belong to the dominant race in it will always distinguish a nation. If that be Saxon, these will be of the Saxon type; if Celtic, they will be Celtic. It used to be said of the Saxon settlers in Ireland beyond the English pale,—such as the Burkes of Connaught, and others,—that they became *Hiberniores Hibernis*, and no rebels against the power of Elizabeth; and several of the later English monarchs were more incorrigible than the Hibernized English settlers. They had adopted the habits and the language of the native Irish. The same is true of the Anglo-Norman settlers in the Scottish Highlands; they became in a few generations as thoroughly Celtic as the native clans. The Frasers, the Chisholms, and others,

fell into the system they found around them. Their dress, their language, their government, became assimilated to those of the purely Celtic clans; and they held nothing whatever to indicate that they derived their origin from a different source, nor did they ever, that we are aware of, make any pretensions to superiority, because of their original connection with the Teutonic races.

With reference to the forms of thought peculiar to the Celtic races, it may be observed, that these embrace questions of national policy, and that they are totally different from those that characterize the Saxon, and may be said indeed to have for centuries been carrying on a life-and-death struggle with them. The Celts had ideas of their own on the subject of the tenure of land, —ideas which correspond more closely with those that distinguish eastern than western nations. Wherever the Celt is, they exist. They distinguish the Celt of France as much as they do the Celt of Great Britain or Ireland. They would appear to be bred in the very bone of the people, and to be well nigh inextinguishable. For centuries previous to 1792, did France underlie the burden of the feudal system. It would have been natural to suppose, that during that period that system would have taken root in the public mind so firmly as to be ineradi-

cable. It is so in England, where the Saxon mind is dominant; no English revolution has ever touched the feudal system. But in France no sooner is that system shaken by a great national movement, than the innate ideas, if we may so speak, of the people assert their power, and the whole is thrown off as an intolerable burden. Celtic France, so soon as free to do so, asserted in the face of the world its sympathy with the principles that have characterized the race. The very change in the title of their monarch from being the King of France to be the King of the French, was in accordance with Celtic principles. Among the Celts the monarch was the head of his people. And these ideas follow the Celt wherever he goes. He has carried them from the east; he is carrying them to the west—to the forests and prairies of America. It would be interesting to know to what extent Celtic influence in America had to do with the origination of the earlier free soil movement; a movement having in view the bringing of the national arrangement on the subject of the tenure of land into accordance with the principles of Celtic policy.

In comparing certain of the principles of national policy which characterize the Celt with those that characterize the Anglo-Norman or

Anglo-Saxon, let it be observed if there be any one thing which we owe to the latter, it is the feudal system. The fundamental idea in that system is, that the property of the soil of a country is vested in the monarch. The corresponding idea in the system of the Celt is, that the soil belongs to the people ; that it is the gift of God for the support of mankind, and in consequence is for the benefit of those who exist upon it. In this the Celtic theory is similar to the Jewish. There was a political truth, as well as a doctrinal statement, in the expression so often made use of in the Psalms, "The earth is the Lord's." And putting aside the consideration that we have to deal with what exists, not with what is best for us, and looking dispassionately at both systems, there is reason to believe that the Celtic theory would commend itself to most men, as that which is most agreeable to right reason, and most likely to promote human happiness. It is these views on the subject of land that make the Celt look with such marked antipathy on a process of eviction. Feudal rights are new and distasteful to him, as at variance with his traditional belief. There may be on the part of his landlord the power to expel him, but he has never come to acquiesce in the right. So strong indeed is the feeling on this subject,

that in the Celtic vocabulary there is a word to express that peculiar curse which is believed to attach to land from which the holder has been violently dispossessed. It is called "eirthear;" and this "eirthear" was thought to be the occasion of incalculable evils to the new possessor. It was quite common, not a generation ago, in certain portions of the Highlands, when a man was on the outlook for a farm, and fell in with one to let, to ask, among other things, "Am bheil eirthear air?" ("Is there a grudge attached to it?") and if there was, it was often thought to be a sufficient reason for avoiding it. These ideas gave a peculiar aspect to a process of eviction, both in the eyes of the native Irish and the Scotch Highlanders. The people have not only the natural desire, common to all men, of having the means of subsistence secured, but they have deep impressions, founded upon their national beliefs, as to the injustice of violently dispossessing a man of his land. The feudal system is now, indeed, leavening the popular mind throughout the Highlands with its own influence; the general laws of the kingdom are being enforced; and yet the natives are slow to acquiesce in them as being just. They retain in a large measure their own views, and probably will do so until the last of them

have turned their backs upon the country. The feudal system will cover with its influence the whole land—for how long a time it is hard to say. There is something in these old Celtic ideas that serves to recommend them strongly to the popular mind; and it need not be wondered at, if at some future time, and in some modified form, they should vindicate for themselves a place in the jurisprudence of Great Britain. Already are they influencing the systems of other nations. The experiment is being made, and the developments of time will show better than anything else, whether they, or the ideas characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon, are most adapted to secure national happiness and prosperity.

But besides these views on the tenure of land, the Celts had peculiar views on the whole question of government,—views radically distinct from those of the Saxon. The central idea in their system was that of the family. The sept was a family of which the chieftain was head; the clan a larger family headed by the chief. The king himself was but the head of his house. The idea never entered into the mind of a Scotch Highlander that the chief was anything else but the head of the clan. His relation to the soil was dependent on, and subordinate to, his relation to the people. His power over them

was well nigh unlimited, but it was strictly paternal. That the patriarchal was the earliest form of government known among mankind is very manifest; nay more, that it had a certain measure of Divine countenance given to it not given to any other. It was undoubtedly the kind of government existing among the Jews down to the time of Saul; being, in fact, the practical form taken by the Theocracy—parents governing under the supremacy of the Divine Being. This system of patriarchal government was universal among the Celtic races. It was the system among the Scottish Highlanders. The chief was the head of the family, while each individual of the clan was a member. The latter was thus related to the chief, not merely as a subject of his government, but as a member of his house; and it thus happened that the poorest old man and woman of the clan carried about with them the grateful and soul-elevating consciousness that the blood of great chiefs flowed in their veins. It may be that some of the soldier-like qualities of the Highlander, and his general politeness and address, are the result of such impressions as these. It does help to make a man a gentleman to have him think that he should be so.

The patriarchal system of government exist-

ing in the Highlands had its advantages. It secured not only the obedience, but the affection of the subject. He not only submitted to the government, but he loved the person of his ruler; while, upon the other hand, it secured to the subject the warm sympathy and paternal care of his superior. These parties were bound together, not only by the ties of political relationship, but by affinity of blood. And whence the devotedness of the Highlander to his chief in the olden time but from this? What else could have impelled him to give his blood for his? What else could have moved the Highland clans to their generous, though unwise and ineffectual efforts on behalf of the Stuarts? These were, in the estimation of the Highlander, the rightful kings. To them alone did he find himself bound by the only tie which he was disposed to acknowledge. Their blood flowed in his veins, and his fathers had fought side by side with theirs.

But it has been objected, that the Celtic system of government is one unfavourable to political liberty, and that all the liberty we possess we owe to the Saxons. This latter statement will hardly bear an examination. The liberties of England are of much later origin than the period of the Saxon irruption. The reign of

King John, when the nobles of the land extracted from the fears of a reluctant monarch the great charter of the nation's liberties, is of a date 700 years later than the establishment of the Saxon power. But it has been asked, Had not our present parliaments their germ in the Saxon *mote* in its different forms? It may well be asked in reply, Is the word *mote* Saxon, or even the thing it signifies? Unquestionably not, any more than it is Celtic. The "mòd" or council meeting was well known among the Celtic races. Hence, numerous localities, both in Scotland and Ireland, derive their names from this institution. We have Cnocamhoid (Knockavoid), Tomamhoid (Tomavoit), Bailemhoid (Balavoit); and we have the well-known Highland proverb, "Cha-nann na h-uile la 'bhitheas mòd aig Macintòisich" ("Mackintosh does not hold a court every day"). The term is quite as familiar to the Celt as to the Saxon. It has been claimed for the Saxon, as derived from the Saxon *meet.* The fact of its being common to the Celt throws some dubiety on the derivation; but be that as it may, the fact is unquestionable. Besides, Scotland had its Parliament ere ever it had any connection with Saxon England. The existence of a national council may be traced beyond the reign

of Malcolm Kenmore, when Gaelic was the spoken language of the court and nation. In the Isle of Man we have the remnant of the national council in the House of Keys, an institution which can be shown to have been associated with the Celtic government of the island; and the "mòd" has not even yet entirely disappeared from the Scottish Highlands. In the island of St Kilda, far out among the waves of the Atlantic, is a purely Celtic population, retaining many of the earlier customs of the race. They have never been brought into contact with our civil government, and they have no sheriffs, jails, or policemen. Yet they have important causes to be decided: an annual division has to be made of their rocks for fowling; the birds caught on neighbouring islands, have to be allocated; and disputes of various kinds among the community arranged. And how is this done? Just by means of the "mòd." The men of the island, as often as needs be, meet in a certain spot, and there, as round the Indian council fire, settle the affairs of the nation. The writer of these sentences, along with some friends, visited this distant island a few years ago. They had brought along with them several articles as presents to the poor people. The fears of the party were

awakened with regard to the division of the presents, and they doubted much whether they could be apportioned without giving offence. On consulting with one of the community, he at once relieved their fears, saying, "Oh, leave that to ourselves!" This was accordingly done, and in half an hour the whole was divided without a murmur. It was done at their "Mòd," an institution of which we have a perfect specimen among a purely Celtic population in this secluded island.

These are a few of the features that distinguished the social and political system of the Celtic races, and such were a few of the advantages which that system possessed. Under the government of our well-beloved Queen we have a grateful blending of the peculiarities of both the contending systems—the Feudal and the Celtic. We have the strength which is said to characterize the former; we have the mutual affection between the governor and the governed that marks the latter. We have the Feudal sovereign blended with the patriarchal head of her race; the representative of the Saxon monarchy of England, as well as of the ancient Celtic monarchies of Scotland and Ireland. Every excellency that was characteristic of both seem to have, at any rate for once, met together to distinguish the reign of Queen Victoria.

LECTURE II.

RELATIVE POSITION OF THE CELTIC AND TEUTONIC RACES—PROBABLE COURSE OF THE ORIGINAL CELTIC POPULATION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND—HIGHLAND NAMES AND THEIR ORIGIN.

THE early history of the Celtic races presents us with a subject of very deep interest. Being, as they were, among the first inhabitants of Europe, they cannot but have left traces in its after history. It was at one time a kind of fashion to deny the existence of any Celtic influence in moulding the social systems of modern Europe. The researches of German scholars are, however, giving the current of thought a different direction; and writers of eminence in that country are now disposed to give to the Celtic element its own place at least in forming the edifice of European society.

The testimony of Scripture and the investigations of science unite in pointing to the East as the cradle of the human race. There, amidst the valleys and head-waters of the Euphrates and

Tigris, and under the shadow of the mighty Caucasus, sprung up those numerous branches of the human race which, striking out, some of them to the east and south, and some to the west and north, have peopled the world; extending themselves in defiance of every obstruction—making the snows and ice of the north minister to their support—braving the winds and waves of unknown seas; and thus fulfilling the destiny appointed to them by their Creator—replenishing the earth. Two races at an early period took possession of Europe—the Celtic and the Teutonic—with their various ramifications. It has been usual to speak of these as waves; and, in accordance with that illustration, it has been generally believed and said that the Celtic wave of population first passed over the face of Europe, its mass gradually receding westward; and, like the same phenomenon in the natural ocean, making way for the rise and progress of a second. In this view of it the Celtic is the older wave, and the Teutonic the second. This may be, and possibly is, true with regard to certain sections of Europe,—our own island for instance; but there seems little ground for believing that it is true with respect to Europe generally. There does not seem to be the slightest evidence for the

existence of a Celtic population at any period to the north of the Rhine. Let a Celtic scholar take up a map, and cast his eye over the topography of the north of Europe, and he will not fall in with a single name of which he can say, with any degree of confidence, that it is derived from the Celtic. In this he will observe a striking contrast to the topography of southern Europe. There almost every name of any antiquity is more or less Celtic in its conformation, and affords irrefragable evidence of the early existence of a Celtic race. This is true more especially of natural objects, which longest retain their original names. There is not a fragment of the Celtic tongues to be traced in such words as the "Vistula," the "Elbe," the "Weser," the "Ems." How different from the rivers of France and Italy we shall afterwards see. If there ever was a Celtic race in northern Europe, they have assuredly left no traces of their existence, a circumstance hardly compatible with their existence at all. It has been said, indeed, that the Cimbric Chersonesus—the modern Jutland—gave origin to the Welsh Cymri. The topography of Jutland affords no evidence of this; and, so far as its evidence goes, would indicate that the Cimbric Chersonesus of the Romans was not the modern Jut-

land at all, if the Cimbric Chersonesus be held to be the original territory of the Cymri. South of the Rhine the evidence for the existence of Celtic races is abundant. In France we have both history and topography combining in affording it. So is it with Switzerland. The writings of Cæsar alone are sufficient to show that the ancient inhabitants of France were Gael; and his testimony receives strong corroboration from the name *Gallia*, which the country bore. But we have remnants of the same race scattered over a surface much wider than France. Like the fossils of our ancient geological periods, they may be dug up from the depths of Grecian topography. A Celtic root ("Cathair," "a city") appears in the Greek word Corinth; while in every πολις in the land, we have not only the πολις of the Greek, but the "Baile" of the Celt. In Italy the traces are no less abundant. There, too, there must have been an early Celtic race, whether Italy was peopled from Greece, or, as Dr Latham thinks, Greece from Italy. The word "Tiber" contains in it the Celtic "tabh," "water," a word which we have in our "Loch Taibh" and "Uisge Thaibh,"—"Loch Tay," and the "Water of Tay." It was not without reasons of more kinds than one, that the Roman soldiers could exclaim, as

they beheld the Tay, "Ecce Tiberum." Both in the Pennine Alps and the Appenines we have the Celtic "Beinn" or "Ben," a "hill." The name Italy itself is said by a Roman author (Aulus Gellius) to be derived from the abundance of its cattle; a statement which a knowledge of the Latin cannot explain, though it can be easily explained by reference to the Celtic; for there the word for cattle in common use to this day is "Feudail," pronounced "eudail" in its aspirated form. As we travel westward the foot-prints of the Celt are more abundant and more recent. We have them in the "Rhone," or "Ruadh amhainn," pronounced "Ruain," the "red river," a name strictly applicable to this river in a great portion of its course; we have the Rhine, or "Réidh amhainn," pronounced "Réain," the "smooth stream," a name no less applicable than the former; we have the "Garonne" or "Garbh amhainn," pronounced "Garrain," the "rough stream;" and we have the "Seine" or "Seimh amhainn," pronounced "Séain," the "gentle stream." Then we have such names as "Rouen," our Scotch "Ruthven," from the Gaelic "Ruthainn;" "Calais," the Gaelic "Caolas," frequently applied in the Hebrides to townships lying upon a sound or strait; "Dunkirk" or "Duncirce;" and numer-

ous others handed down to us unchanged for centuries.

From all this it would appear that, in their progress westward, the Celtic races followed the shores of the Mediterranean, and that they never extended northward beyond the Danube and the Rhine. They peopled Greece, Italy, Switzerland, France, and Spain. It would appear, also, that as the Celtic races followed the shores of the Mediterranean, the Teutonic followed those of the Baltic. The probability is, that the progress of the two races was contemporaneous, and the probability is further, that they are ethnologically more of one blood, and separated at a period much more recent in the history of the human race than is generally supposed. Accurate observation, with regard both to Celtic and Saxon philology, brings out a much closer resemblance between the two classes of languages, than a mere superficial inquiry would warrant us in believing. Let us, for example, take some of the words used to signify the members of the human body, or to describe their use in both languages, and compare them. For instance, the head.—The hair of the head is in Gaelic "Falt," a very different word from the English; but we have the same word in the English "felt," which is also applied to "hair.'

Then the English "bald" has its representative in the Gaelic "maol." The English verb to "butt," as with the head, is similar to the Gaelic "put." The English "brow" is not represented by the Gaelic "bathais," applied to the same object; but we have it in the word "bruaich," applied to a bank of earth or the brow of a hill. There is a family resemblance between the Gaelic "suil," the "eye," and the English "see." "Sròn," "the nose," seems represented by the English "snore," an action probably common to both Celt and Saxon. "Beul," "the mouth," has its fellow in the Saxon "Bowl," a "hollow vessel." "Deud," "a tooth," is the same word with its English synonym; so is "teangaidh" with the corresponding "tongue;" and although we do not find the Gaelic "Feusaig," "a beard," represented by the English synonym, yet we have precisely the same word in "whisker." Thus, without going beyond the human head, we have all the above terms evidently derived from the same source. As we decend to the rest of the body we find the same series of resemblances, though not always to be traced in the immediate application of the terms. The corresponding word in each language is not always applied to the same object, but to objects related to it. Thus, the Gaelic

"làmh," pronounced "làv," is not represented by the Saxon hand, but by the "glove." An acute and careful examination of both languages is ready to flood one with resemblances, the discovery of which makes little demand on the fancy; but which, when observed, appears so obvious as to commend themselves to the coolest and most prosaic of inquirers.

According to some ancient writers of their own the descent of the Celts is quite classical. They tell us that Hercules was a Celt; so were the Titans, as also their cousins the Giants; so that the heaping of Pelion on Ossa, and Olympus on Pelion, was a piece of ancient Celtic workmanship, and creditable, no doubt, to the enterprise and perseverance of the race. General Vallancey maintains that Hercules was the Celtic Oghum; whence the *Beth luis nuin an Oghuim*, or ancient Irish alphabet,—and that he was thus the father of Irish literature. There is in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library an ancient Gaelic MS., having on one of its leaves the name of the writer or owner inscribed, "mise Ferghus o Albain," containing a long account of Hercules and the other heroes of ancient mythology, and giving the genealogy of Hercules up to Noah. It proceeds,—"Ercoil mac Amphitrionis, mhic Antestis, mhic Anolis,

mhic Mitonis, mhic Festime, mhic Atnol, mhic Gregais, mhic Gomer, mhic Jafed, mhic Noe." The words *mac* and *mhic* signifying "son." The passage does not require any further translation. Here, then, we have the direct descent of Hercules from Noah ;—the genealogy, as will be observed, embracing Gomer, the ancestor of the Welsh Cymri. From this line of ancestors we have traced the kings of Ireland; the whole genealogical line of descent being complete from Adam to the kings of Tara. This laughs to scorn all modern European genealogies but itself. The only wonder is, that, like M'Neil, the illustrious predecessor of these kings did not spurn all connection with Noah, and succeed in weathering the flood majestically in a boat of his own.

But let us come to the Celtic population of the British islands, and endeavour to trace its early history. With the Cymric portion of it we do not profess to have to do; and we will confine our notices chiefly to the Gaelic races. And, first of all, where are these to be found at present? In Ireland, occupying what may be loosely designated as the southern and western portion of the island. If a line were drawn from Loch Swilly, in the county of Donegal, to Waterford, on the south-east corner of the

island, it would almost mark in its course the line of separation between the Celtic and Teutonic races. In Scotland, in like manner, the Celtic races occupy the whole of the north-western portion of the kingdom; an oblique line similar to that spoken of in Ireland, but running from north-east at the mouth of the Findhorn, south-westerly to the mouth of the Leven, indicating pretty closely the line of division between the same races. To these must be added the Isle of Man, the ancient possession of a portion of the Gaelic Celts. On looking at the position of the Celtic tribes as here described, the question arises, How did they come to be so placed? There must surely be some cause for so peculiar an arrangement of the population of the country. Were an ordinary observer to have the facts of the case presented to him without any accompanying information, he would be very ready to come to a conclusion on the subject. He would be disposed to say: "Here are these remains of the Celtic tribes pressed into these two corners of these islands. Nothing could have occasioned this but the pressure of other populations following upon them, and gradually occupying the territory from which they had been constrained to retire." In this way the illustration of the wave would be quite

appropriate. This earlier wave has been driven forward by a succeeding one until it can retire no farther. In the words of Galgacus, as given by Tacitus, when addressing his men previous to the battle of the *Mons Grampius:* "Nulla jam gens ultra; nihil nisi fluctus et saxa." "No nation now lies beyond; there is nothing there but rocks and the waters of the ocean." And here it may be allowable to make a digression, while remarking how many of our common proverbial quotations from the Latin are taken from the address of this noble old Celt; as "Omne ignotum pro magnifico est." "Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant." If the address of this ancient chief, as given by Tacitus, be authentic,—if it be even in the spirit of the original,—there is not in any language a more eloquent or soul-stirring appeal to man on behalf of liberty.

But to return. The probable course which the stream of population took towards Great Britain and Ireland, and throughout their borders, was as follows:—A race of Gaelic Celts first of all crossed the Straits of Dover from France, and occupied both islands. In every part of England we have still remnants of the Gaelic language. They crop up every here and there like the points of the primitive rocks which

present themselves at irregular intervals, rising above the masses of later strata which elsewhere overlay them, and bury them in well-nigh unfathomable depths. The name London would appear to be of Gaelic origin, having the Gaelic "Dun," "a stronghold or fort," embraced in it. Such names as the Avon of Hampshire, Warwickshire, and Wiltshire, having the Gaelic "amhainn," pronounced "avain," "a river;" the Severn, "Séimh bhùrn," or "soft flowing water," of Gloucestershire; the Colne, "Caol amhainn," "narrow river," of Essex and Gloucestershire; the Cam, "Uisge Càm," or "winding water," of Cambridgeshire, are unquestionably Gaelic. As we travel northward we find these remains somewhat more numerous;—as in the Eden and Calder of Cumberland, the Tyne of Northumberland, and other cases. On the Scottish side of the Border they are more abundant than on the English. On the east coast we have Dunbar and Duntallon (Tantallon) between the Scandinavian Berwick and North Berwick. We have Drem ("Druim," a "ridge"); Tranent ("Traigh," "the coast," being quite manifest in the word); Dalkeith ("Dalché," "the creamy dale"); Roslin ("Roslinne," "the projection in the stream"); and innumerable other instances of names purely Gaelic.

Throughout Great Britain, even in Wales, we have evidence of an ancient Gaelic population having existence, indicating unmistakeably that such a population must have at one time covered the island.

To this Gaelic population a British or Welsh one would seem to have succeeded, either absorbing, as is most likely, the former into themselves, so far as they advanced, or pressing them onwards to the north and west. This British population would appear to have reached as far as the skirts of the Grampians; and as Father Innes, the founder of the School of real Scottish antiquaries, maintained, with arguments never yet answered, formed the ancient race of the Picts. There is as much evidence to prove that the Welsh language was spoken in the greater portion of the Scottish Lowlands as that the Gaelic was. In some quarters the evidence lies on the very surface, as in the valley of the Clyde. Were history silent, topography would prove it. The Lanarks, Caerlaverocks, Carstairs, Carmunnocks, all indicate the early existence of a British population. Still farther north the evidence is nearly as clear. Forfarshire and Aberdeenshire are full of both Gaelic and British names, just as the western islands are full of names both Gaelic and Scandinavian. Panmure

(Pen mawr), Longforgan (Llan forgan), Panbride, Carnoustie (the British "Caer"), Menmuir (Maen mawr, the "great stone"), Aberbrothock, Lintrathen, are all obviously British. Aberdeen is British, as are many names in the same county. It is remarkable, however, that, intermediate between Strathclyde and these northern districts, there lies a section of the country in which few or no British names appear—the ancient kingdom of Fife. It is at the same time full of names manifestly Gaelic; as, for instance, "Cill," applied to a church. There are numerous "Kils" in Fife—Kilmeny, Kilconquhar, &c., while there is not one in Forfar, Mearns, or Aberdeenshire. The one "Kil" in Aberdeenshire, "Kildrummy," is clearly a corruption for Kindrummie, "the head of the ridge." We have heard of no saint of the name of Drummie. It would seem as if the Gael continued to hold the Fife peninsula when surrounded on the west and north by the Cymri. "Aberdour" is the only British name that appears in the topography of Fife; and it is in almost the extreme west of the district. The non-existence of a British population in Fife is an interesting fact, taken in connection with the absence of those monumental remains which distinguish the counties of Forfar, Aberdeen,

&c., lying to the north of it. It is doubtful whether there are evidences of a Cymric population in the Lothians and Berwickshire. The possessions of the Gael there may have passed into the hands of the Romans, and from them into the hands of a Scandinavian race, without there being any intervening possession on the part of the British. With regard to the Scottish Highlands, there is one point which topography makes abundantly clear, that they never were occupied save by a population of Gaelic Celts, with the exception of the districts seized by the Scandinavian invaders of the ninth and succeeding centuries. No Roman ever trod the land as a conqueror; and any power obtained by the Northmen was of short duration, and very incomplete in its character. It is perhaps a hackneyed boast, and yet it is something for the Caledonian to boast of, that he belongs to the only nation in either Europe, Asia, or Africa that contested successfully with the power of ancient Rome, and that although the armies that assailed him were commanded with all the military skill of an Agricola.

In his remarkable volume, entitled, "My Schools and Schoolmasters," &c., the late Hugh Miller adverts to a curious topographical fact in the county of Ross. As it has some connec-

tion with the subject in discussion, let us quote his own words. Speaking of the village of Kinlochewe, at the head of Loch Maree, he says, "The name, that of an old farm which stretches out along the head or upper end of Loch Maree, has a remarkable etymology ; it means simply the head of Loch Ewe—the salt water loch into which the waters of Loch Maree empty themselves by a river little more than a mile in length, and whose present head is some sixteen or twenty miles distant from the farm that bears its name. Ere that last elevation of the land, however, to which our country owes the level marginal strip that stretches between the present coast-line and the ancient one, the sea must have found its way to the old farm. Loch Maree (Mary's Loch*), a name evidently of mediæval origin, would then have existed as a prolongation of the marine Loch Ewe, and *Kinlochewe* would have actually been what the compound words signify, the head of Loch Ewe. There seems to be reason for holding that, ere the latest elevation of the land took place in our island, it had received its first inhabitants —rude savages who had employed tools and

* This is a mistake. It is Malrube's Loch, the saint to whom the church of Applecross was dedicated, as well as the chapel in the small burying-ground in the Island Maree.

weapons of stone, and fashioned canoes out of single logs of wood. Are we to accept etymologies such as the instanced one (and there are several such in the Highlands as good) in evidence that these aboriginal savages were of the Celtic race, and that Gaelic was spoken in Scotland at a time when its stripes of grassy links, and the sites of many of its seaport towns, such as Leith, Greenock, Musselburgh, and Cromarty, existed as oozy sea-beaches, covered twice every day by the waters of the ocean." All that is necessary to make the argument here complete is, that we should be able to show, that previous to the ecclesiastical period, Loch Maree did not bear the name of Loch Ewe.

Many Irish writers give a different account of the origin of the present Gael from that given above. The story of Gathelus and Scota is too well known to need repetition. This story brings the Celts from Egypt. The different accounts given by some of their own brethren of their origin are such, it appears, that one of them must be correct. Thus, one account derives them from Shem; indeed, they were long believed to be a Shemitic race; another brings them from Japhet, as in that already quoted from the ancient MS.; and the last, or Scotic story, would seem to derive them from Ham.

Their friends have thus taken good care to make them safe in regard to one or other of these derivations. Irish writers relate, that after having been occupied by two previous bodies of colonists, the Firbolg and the Tuath de Danann, Ireland received the Milesian race from Spain about 500 years B.C. Some of these, indeed, have endeavoured to make the Milesian emigration contemporaneous with the conquest of Spain by the Carthaginians, about 219 B.C., and hold that the conquest afforded the reason for the flight of the Spanish colonists into Ireland. From these Milesians do the Irish derive almost the whole clans, both of Ireland and Scotland. The race of Heremon they hold to be the stock whence Scotland derived her Gaelic population. If the emigration of the Milesians from Spain did not take place till 219 B.C., this statement with regard to Scotland cannot be true; if the emigration took place at the earlier period, let us see what evidence there is of these being the progenitors of the Scottish Gael. In the first place, all analogy is against the probability of Ireland being peopled from Spain, and in favour of its being peopled from Great Britain. The peopling of America, an event which falls within the range of modern history, gives us an example of how a country receives

its population. It is first occupied at its point nearest to a peopled country, and from thence onwards throughout its territory. The analogy here, as well as elsewhere, is manifestly in favour of the idea that Ireland was peopled, not from Great Britain merely, but from Scotland. The Irish coast is visible from the Scottish along the whole of Galloway; and from thence, in accordance with all analogy, so far as known, did the first colonists of Ireland set out. It would require evidence of the very strongest kind to prove that Scotland was originally peopled from Ireland; and that such evidence does not exist we need hardly say. It would almost be as well to suppose that our streams should ascend our valleys, irrespective of all natural law, as this. The possibility of Scotland being peopled from Ireland we do not question; but the deviations from the natural course in all processes such as the peopling of a country, are so rare, and these events have generally a progress so uniform, that it is not upon slight grounds, such as national traditions—if they are traditions, more especially, that seem to gratify national vanity—that our belief can be accorded to an irregularity so marked as that which the Irish theory involves. Thus, it is most probable that the Irish, and not the English Channel

was the passage by which Ireland was reached by its earlier immigrants. Indeed, the nature of the modes of conveyance by sea possessed by the ancient Celts would of itself be almost sufficient to establish this. If the curragh, or wicker and hide boat, was the only vessel possessed by the Irish in the sixth century, how are we to conceive that the ancestors of these people had vessels with which they crossed the Bay of Biscay eight or ten centuries before?

That a curragh from the opposite continent might occasionally be cast ashore on the coast of Ireland is sufficiently probable. The canoe voyages of the South Sea Islanders are too well known to make this doubtful; but the probability ceases when we are told that an amount of emigration took place across the Bay of Biscay which led to an entire change in the population of Ireland.

Irish writers have maintained that there were two great migrations of the Scots from Ireland into Scotland—one about 250 years after Christ, and another, commonly called the Dalriadic Settlement, in the year 503 A.C., when Lorn, Fergus, and Angus, the sons of Erc, led a colony across the Irish Channel, and settled with them in Argyleshire. For this latter emigration the authorities are unquestionable: Bede

is quite distinct ; nor could he have been mistaken regarding an event that took place less than 200 years before his own time. The Irish annalists are equally distinct with regard to it. Neither of these, however, describe it as an invasion. It would appear rather to have been an emigration arising probably from some intestine broils or family disputes at home. The first of these migrations is now very generally given up as an event for whose occurrence we have no evidence of any value ; and Irish writers are now in the way of maintaining that Scotland owes its Gaelic population to the Dalriadic immigration in the year 503. This view, however, is one not easily supported. Is it possible, it may be asked, that during the period which intervened between A.D. 503 and the first dawn of authentic history, the Gael would have come to occupy the place among the Scottish population which we know them to have held ?—that they should have erased, over a large portion of the kingdom, the whole ancient topography, giving their own names to every object, and even retiring from large sections of the country, leaving nothing but their names behind ?—sections in which it is manifest, in the thirteenth century that there had not been a word of Gaelic spoken for a couple of centuries previously. That the

Dalriadic emigrants were connected by marriage, or otherwise, with the ancient Gael, is very probable, and that these were called Gaidheal (Gael), as contradistinguished from the Picts, is true. There is a MS. in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library—a transcript of the work known in Ireland as the "Synchronisms of Flann of Bute"—in which, in noting the reign of Kenneth M'Alpin in 843 A.C., it is said that he was "an ceud righ a ghlac righe Scain do na Gaidhealaibh" ("the first king who seized the kingdom of Scone for the Gael"). It is clear, that in the estimation of this writer, who was a monk in the monastery of Monasterboice, the Gael were the founders of the Scottish monarchy. While this is true, however, is it by any means probable that a small band of emigrants, landing in Scotland from Ireland in 503 A.C., would have been able in the year 843 A.C. to overthrow a kingdom which had successfully resisted the Roman armies?—and that the number of emigrants could not have been large, is clear from the statement of Tacitus, given on the authority of Agricola, that with one Roman legion he could have seized the whole of Ireland;—very probably an exaggeration, but it gives the impression that existed in Roman Britain at the time with re-

spect to the resources of Ireland, especially the number of its population.

There are differences between the Gael of Scotland and those of Ireland which go far to cast dubiety on the Irish theory of the peopling of Scotland, and which lead to the conclusion that the two races diverged at a much earlier period than the supporters of that theory are disposed to allow. The difference in the language is considerable. It is not intended to enter here on a philological discussion of this difference, but to refer merely to the fact of its existence; nor is it intended to discuss the question of which dialect is the purer—the Scottish or the Irish. Each people will continue to prefer their own. The Scottish Gaelic might be the better of the present tense, as in use in the Irish verb, and the Irish might be the better of a portion of the softness which the Scottish Gael have introduced into the spoken tongue. The differences between the dialects are found in the vocables, accent, and grammatical inflection; and so various are these, that it is not easy to conceive of them as having been one and the same speech, even at the period of the Dalriadic settlement. It is more difficult to conceive, when we bear in mind that, down till a period as recent as 300

years ago, there was continual intercourse between the two races. Besides, the Scottish Gaelic bears the impress of being unquestionably the older form of the language, and was probably at one time more the dialect of Ireland than that at present in use. At least most of the points in which the Irish differs from it seem to have been the result of superior cultivation. It does strike an impartial observer, that the structure of the Irish tongue has more the aspect of being the result of the application of artistic principles than that of the Scottish Gaelic, which is eminently natural.

Then the Scottish Gael is distinguished from the Irish by his dress. We have no satisfactory authority for believing that the striped clothing of the Scot, called tartan, ever was known in Ireland ; yet its existence among the Highlanders can be traced back to a very early period. It is not maintained that what are called clan tartans are of very great antiquity ; but tartan or striped clothing was the earliest dress worn by the Gael of Scotland. This is very remarkable, if they are but an Irish colony. The kilt, so like the Roman toga, is a Scottish, not an Irish form of attire. How did the Scottish Highlanders fall upon this peculiar dress ? It is not likely that the Irish

Celt, coming to a colder climate than his own, would exchange the ordinary trousers, or their predecessors in ancient times, for a dress so manifestly cool as the Scottish kilt. It is no doubt said that the kilt is a dress of very recent origin,—said, however, by parties who, as has happened with so many writers on Highland matters, had never given themselves the trouble to make much inquiry into the facts of the case. In the Appendix to the "Collectanea" of the Iona Club will be seen a collection of documents sufficient to set entirely at rest the whole question of the antiquity of this dress. In addition to the evidence there given, it may be stated that there is in Castle Grant, Inverness-shire, a portrait of a family piper, taken in the beginning of last century, which carries the dress back a hundred years, although it has been averred not to be a hundred years old. In Taymouth Castle is a portrait of a gentleman of the sixteenth century dressed in full Highland costume. In the Island of Harris is an old ecclesiastical ruin, called the Church of St Clement, a portion of which is said to be the oldest stone building in Scotland, except part of the Cathedral of Glasgow. The tower is manifestly a building of very great antiquity. Yet on this tower is sculptured the form of a man

who is dressed in the kilt, just as at present worn in the Scottish Highlands. In the reign of Henry VIII. of England the Highlanders were called Reddshanks, as we find by the letter of John Elder, addressed to that monarch, and given in the Appendix to the Transactions of the Iona Club. This name is otherwise well known as having been applied to them at that period. How the colour of their shanks could have been so red, or, if red, could have been known, unless they wore the kilt, it is not easy to imagine. This marked difference of dress between the Irish and the Scottish Highlanders affords strong presumption against the latter being a mere Irish colony.

Besides these differences in language and dress, there is a marked difference between much of the music of the Highlanders and that of the Irish. Nothing is more permanently characteristic of a people than their music. That of the east is entirely different from that of the west. The music of Italy is different from that of Germany,—that is, the native airs of the people. The national music of England has its own peculiarities; and it would appear to have been so during the past history of the people who inhabit these several countries. Indeed, the music of a people would seem to be more permanent

than their language, and to retain more fixedly its original type. With respect to that of Scotland and Ireland, there is no doubt much that is common to both,—enough to show that originally they were derived from the same source; yet they have each much that is peculiar. The bagpipe music of Scotland is in a great measure unknown in Ireland. The instrument itself is not of the Irish type. In its earlier form (*tibia utricularis*) it was manifestly well known among the Celtic races. It was common to the Celts of Italy, as of Scotland and Ireland; but the pipe, and the real pipe music of Scotland, is of Scotland, and of nowhere else. There is not so much as one specimen of this music to be found on the Irish side of the Channel. It is true, we cannot trace any of the remarkable compositions embraced in the "Piobaireachd" music of Scotland to a period earlier than the fifteenth century; the oldest known of them being supposed to be of the same date (1411) with the battle of Harlaw; but there is little reason to doubt that they existed before, and were then well known as a portion of the national music of the people.

The topography of Scotland affords strong evidence of a kind unfavourable to the Irish theory of Scottish colonization. In the migrations of the clans from one part of Scotland to

another nothing was more common than carrying the names of their former villages and townships along with them, and applying them to localities in their more recent *locale*. The Grants, upon removing from Loch Ness-side to the valley of the Spey, transferred many of their former names, and applied them to the townships there. And this practice is common to all nations. America is studded with European names. There is hardly a place in the old country whose name is not applied by some ardent admirer to some settlement in the New World; so that one finds himself among Londons, Edinburghs, Dublins, Parises, Yorks, innumerable. How can it be accounted for that no such thing took place in connection with the Irish colonization of Scotland? Even in Kintyre and the Island of Islay—both of them portions of the country of the Scottish Gael, within sight of the Irish coast—we discover no appearance of mere Irish topography. "Sliabh," in Ireland, is "Beinn" in Scotland; both signifying a "hill." The name "Uisge," or "Esk" (water), so frequently applied to a stream in Scotland, very rarely, if ever, occurs in Ireland. We have but comparatively few "Ballys" as compared with Ireland. There is hardly an "Inver" in all Ireland: one, it is said. In

fact, considering the identity of the languages, there is nothing more remarkable than the diversity in the topographies of the two countries. And rising from the names of places to those of men, we find similar diversities, and those diversities by no means of recent growth, as can be shown. Where are the innumerable O's of the Irish clans to be found in Scotland? For their O'Neil we have M'Neil; for their O'Donnell we have M'Donald or M'Donnell; for their O'Loughlin we have M'Lauchlan. O'Duibhne, the Celtic patronymic of the clan Campbell, is the only "O" Scotland possesses; and it has been for a long period well nigh obsolete. Surely, if our Highlanders were colonists of a period so late as the sixth century we should have had at the first dawn of the historic period more abundant remains than then existed of what is distinctive of the Celt of Ireland. The theory of our Irish colonization does not meet the demands of the case with respect to the origin of the Scottish Highlanders. We are not disposed to quarrel with our Irish brethren for denying to Britain the honour of giving them an origin, and transferring it to Spain. Nor are we disposed to quarrel with them at all. We would rather draw somewhat tighter the bonds between them and us. There is much about them

of which the race may be proud; but, as Scottish Highlanders, we would be excused following them in their peregrinations, more especially when the facts, as well as the common sense of the case, point to an origin nearer home, and one no less creditable, saying the least, than if derived from Spain.

It is not proposed, in these pages, to enter upon the consideration of the early internal history of the Scottish Highlands; but there is a subject which has been seldom handled, and which opens up to the student of antiquities a field of interesting research,—the names by which the clans are distinguished. Perhaps there is not a surname in the Highlands older than the thirteenth or fourteenth century. No such thing appears in any of our older charters. The system of patronymics appears to have been uniformly followed; and no small difficulty arises, in consequence, to the decipherers of our more ancient historical documents. William mac Eoin, mhic Fherchair, mhic Domhnuill, &c., or Alasdair mac Dhunchaidh, mhic Eòbhain, mhic Alpain, &c., is the usual form for designating individuals; giving merely the name of a man's father, grandfather, and so on, until the designation becomes sufficiently distinctive. No doubt, the general designations of the great

clans,—as Clann Domhnuill, or Clann Chuinn (the Clan Donald), Clann Ghillsheathain (Clan M'Lean), and such like,—are of a very high antiquity; but these designations were not applied to individuals, but only to the sept.

It will be found that the clan names of the Highlands may be arranged under several classes. One class we will find, like those of the Norman families, to be derived from the lands on which those who bore the name lived. This is the case with the family of Sutherland and their offshoots. The name is simply *de Sutherlandia*, and is obviously derived from the territory occupied. The original name of Freskyn, by which this family was distinguished, is said by some to have been Saxon, and by others Norman. It can hardly have been Saxon; because we have no evidence that the Anglo-Saxons settled so far north as Morayshire, the district in which this family first appear at a period so early as that in which we meet with them in our charters. If they were Normans, their Norman designation would have accompanied them, as in the case of the Gordons, Frasers, Comyns, and other Norman families. But not having a Norman designation, and the age of charters in the Anglo-Norman form having arrived, they are indebted for a designation

to the lands either occupied by them in continuation, or bestowed upon them by the Crown. Hence they became De Sutherlandia and De Moravia. The word Freskyn has very much of a Celtic aspect, and very probably was a term derived from some ancestor of the race. It means Freasc chinn (carrying his head high); thus Hugh Freskyn would be Hugh of the erect head, a term likely to be sufficiently applicable to some of these proud chiefs. It has been said that this family were Flemings; but they never bear in any of our existing charters, as is usual in such cases, the designation of *Flandrensis*. So far as tradition goes, the Sutherlands have always been, and are to this day, looked upon as a Highland clan, receiving a name, after the Anglo-Norman fashion, about the commencement of the Anglo-Norman period, but known among the Gael simply as "Cattaich," a branch of the ancient clan Chattan, the race who unquestionably formed the earlier inhabitants of Moray.

Coming southward, we meet another name of the same class with the above in that of Ross. This name is purely Anglo-Norman in its form. It is just another form of "De Ross." This is clear from the earlier charters of the head of the clan. The Celtic name of the Rosses is M'Gillandrias, a name purely ecclesiastical, as we shall

see afterwards in dealing with another class of names. It has been maintained with respect to the clan Rose, which is a branch of the family of Ross, that they are descended from the ancient Norman family of De Roos. This is one of the results of the long-prevailing mania in favour of Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman origins. Among these clans themselves the common origin of the Rosses and Roses has always been maintained; and that one of them is Celtic can be established on incontrovertible evidence. It need hardly be said that this would settle all questions regarding the other. The Roses as well as the Rosses belong unquestionably to the ancient stock of M'Gillandrias, or, as the name is modernized, Gillanders. There are families of the Rosses who bear this name to the present day. It would require a large amount of evidence to overbear the probability of this account in the opinion of those who have made clan history a study.

Another of our Normanized names is that of Grant. This clan has been looked upon as really Norman by some writers on Highland genealogy. It has been said that the ancient form of the name is "De Grant." It may be so; but this only proves how much Scotland, especially the government, became Normanized from

the thirteenth century downwards. The ancient name of the clan Munro in our charters is "De Munro;" but nobody ever thought of concluding from this that the Munros are Normans. The name Grant has a definite meaning in Gaelic ("Grannd," "ugly or harsh-featured"), which probably led to its being applied to one of the ancestors of the clan. It may, however, have been adopted from some portion of their territory, as Castle Grant, which is evidently a descriptive name. To show this, it is only necessary to observe, that we have a Glen Grant in the valley of the Spey, and a Ballygrant in Islay. The name became, as in other cases of a similar kind, the Norman "De Grant" in the earlier charters; but this is no proof of the family being of Norman descent. In Highland story,—and in cases of the kind such story is rarely without foundation,—the Grants are a branch of the "Siol Alpain," or "Race of Alpin," cognate with the M'Gregors and kindred clans; and it is somewhat remarkable, as corroborative of this, that the dialect of Gaelic spoken in the native country of the Grants closely resembles that spoken among the chief branches of the race in Perthshire. One tribe of the Grants bears the strictly Celtic patronymic of "Mac mhic Phadruig."

Another Norman name, borne by what is in all probability a Celtic race, is that of Moray or Murray. These Murrays were the men of Moray, who had manifestly no Norman designation of their own,—in fact, not being Normans—and who received their designation from their territory in Moray. They are the same race with the men of Sutherland, and formed, in all likelihood, a portion of the ancient Moravienses. There has been always a close connection and much intercourse maintained between the family of Moray and those of the southern Clan Chattan.

The Campbells, or "Siol Duibhne," are said to bear the Norman name of "De Campo Bello." This origin of the name Campbell is somewhat more dignified than that which would attribute it to the wry mouth of one of the ancestors of the race; "Càm beul" having that meaning in Gaelic. M'Donald the Keppoch poet, however, thought the Celtic the true derivation, when he satirizes the clan as "luchd nam beul sligneach" ("The race of the wry mouth"). Even were the name derived from the words "De Campo Bello," this does not prove the Norman origin of the clan. As in the case of the Sutherlands and Morays, the "Campo Bello" is more probably a locality in Scotland than in Nor-

mandy. It may be mere conjecture, and is only given as conjecture, that this is some locality in the ancient territory of the Argyle family, whence they took their title on receiving feudal charters. The probability, however, with regard to the origin of the name, lies with the Celtic designation of "Càm beul."

The Macdonalds had their Anglo-Norman designation as well as other clans. They were called "De Insulis," by which designation they appear in all their earlier charters. And so much did it become the practice to transfer these designations to common use, that the English surname "Isles" began in the sixteenth century to be applied to the family. Thus we have Angus Isles, Margaret Isles; and the wonder is, considering what happened in similar cases, that the name did not continue to adhere to them permanently.

A second class of surnames in the Highlands is ecclesiastical. These are generally formed by prefixing the word "maol" or "gille," "a servant," to the name of some noted saint, and frequently to the name of the Divine Being himself. These prefixes indicated that the person bearing the name was servant to, or dedicated to, him whose name was affixed. It is remarkable how numerous this class of names

is, showing how powerful was the influence wielded by the early Christian Church in the Highlands. We have already spoken of the Rosses, and, in doing so, observed that their Celtic name is of this character. The ancestor from whom they derived their name of M'Gillandrias was a "Gill-Andrias," or "Servant of St Andrew;" thus being connected with the patron saint of the kingdom. The clan M'Lean also bear an ecclesiastical designation. The name, according to accurate Celtic orthography, is "Mac Gille Sheathain" ("The Son of the Servant of St John"). Seathan is the old Gaelic form of the name John, and is retained in Ireland to the present time. We have the name of the same saint in the church of Killean (Cill Sheathain), in Kintyre, a church dedicated to the Apostle John. It is not improbable that the Gillsheathain, from whom this clan was descended, was himself a descendant of the Lord of the Isles. The name of the Buchanans, an ancient Celtic race, is also ecclesiastical; and it is likely that that of M'Auslan, by which they were anciently designated, passed into Buchanan on the lands and chieftainship of the clan falling into the hands of an ecclesiastic; unless it be that they bear an Anglo-Norman designation from their place of Buchanan

in Stirlingshire. Buchanan, however, is not the ancient name of their principal seat; it is rather a modern one; and the fact that in Gaelic the name is usually "Mac a Chanonaich," "The Son of the Canon," would seem to show its Celtic ecclesiastical origin. It is a well-known historical fact, that the celibacy of the clergy was unknown in the Scottish Highlands down to near the period of the Reformation; whence the perfect congruity between the existence of these ecclesiastical names and the usual practice of the church at the time. Makellar, a common name in Argyllshire, is ecclesiastical. The "Cealloir" was the head of the monastic establishment, synonymous with the English "superior." "M'Pherson" is an ecclesiastical designation, being a form of "The Son of the Parson;" the word "parson," however, being derived, not from the English "parson," but the Latin "persona," like the English term. "M'Vicar" is from the same source. To these may be added numerous other names, some Christian, some surnames,—as Gilchrist ("Gillachriosd," "The Servant of Christ"); Gillies ("Gilliosa," "The Servant of Jesus"); Malcolm ("Maolcholum," "The Servant of Columba"); M'Nab ("The Son of the Abbot"); Gilmore ("The Servant of Mary"); Gilfillan ("The Servant of

Fillan"); M'Callum ("The Son of Malcolm"); M'Lure ("M'Gilleabhar," "The Servant of the Book"); "M'Gilleabhrà" ("The Servant of the Eternal World"); M'Lellan ("Macgill Fhaolain," "The Son of the Servant of Faolan"); Gilbert ("Gillabrìd," "The Servant of St Bridget").

Reference has already been made to the great northern confederation of the Clan Chattan. It has been supposed by some that these are a branch of a great German tribe—the Catti; by others that they have derived their name from their clan badge, the mountain cat. There is little, however, to encourage the belief that either of these accounts of the origin of the name "Chattan" is correct; while there is much reason to believe, that, as in other cases specified, the name is ecclesiastical, and that the clan is in reality the clan of St Cattan, a well-known Scottish saint. The name is found in other connections, as in "Kilchattan," a church in Argyllshire, and "Ardchattan," a district and parish in the same county. One of the branches of the confederation—the Macphersons—acknowledge as their ancestor Dughall Dall M'Gilleachatain. This "Gilleachatan," is just "The Servant of St Cattan;" and, if the name be derived from him, it is decidedly ecclesiastical.

In the Gaelic MS. of 1469, found in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library, and printed in the Transactions of the Iona Club, there is a genealogical tree of this tribe given, beginning with "genelach clann an Toisich an so," *i.e.*, "Clann Gillicatain." The account runs thus: "Uilliam agus Donaill da mhic Uilliam mhic Fherchair ic Uilliam ic Gillemitil ic Fherchair;" and so on, till it comes to "ic Neachtain, ic Gillicatain, o fuil Clann Gillicatain;" or, in English, having traced the tribe up to Gillicattan, the writer says, from whom descend the clan of Gillicattan. If this account be correct, and there does not seem to be any reason to doubt it, this, one of the largest and most powerful of the Highland clans, bears an ecclesiastical designation, and it is in reality the children of St Cattan. This does not in the least touch the argument for the identity of the Cattaich of Sutherland with the Clan Chattan of Inverness-shire, but it disposes very completely of the argument for the descent of the latter from Macduff, Thane of Fife. We suspect there would be little difficulty in tracing the tribe to a period anterior to the existence of the said Macduff. And here it may be observed, that there is every probability that these tribes are a remnant of the ancient Moravienses dis-

persed by Malcolm the Fourth for their adherence to a rival candidate for the Scottish crown. One branch of the confederation, the M'Phersons, bears the designation of "Clann Mhuireaich" ("The Sons of Murdoch"); and it is said that they derived this name, as well as that of M'Pherson, from a certain Murdoch who was parson of Kingussie. It is remarkable, however, that this Murdoch does not appear in the older genealogical trees of the Clan Chattan; and this story of the race would appear to be a recent one. There is another race calling themselves latterly M'Phersons, in the Hebrides, who are also Clann Mhuireadhaich, but they are cognate with the Clann Mhuireadhaich of Ireland, and have no connection with the M'Phersons of Badenoch. Is it not possible that the name "Siol Mhuireadhaich" may mean, not the "Children of Murdoch," but the "Men of Moray?" This is a conjecture, but not an improbable one. What is there less likely about their carrying with them the name of Moray to Badenoch, than the Murrays carrying it into Perthshire? But, however it may be with respect to this designation, there is little room to doubt that the general name of the confederation, the Clan Chattan, is an ecclesiastical one. It has never, perhaps, been

adverted to, to what extent an ecclesiastical influence affected the nomenclature of the Highlands, nor has it been much more than touched upon here. It is, however, a subject worthy of inquiry, and for one reason, as showing the power which the early Christian church wielded in this country, and the extent to which civilization existed during these early ages.

A large class of Highland names is professional or descriptive. Of these are Gow ("a smith"); M'Leister ("Fletcher," "The Arrow-Maker's Son"); M'Stalcair ("Stalker," "The Son of the Falconer"); M'Intyre ("Macantsaoir," "The Carpenter's son"); Dubh ("Duff"); and a host of others. Many Lowland names are descriptive in Gaelic, and are in reality Celtic names; such as More ("Mòr," "great"); Begg ("Beag," "little"); Roy ("Ruadh," "red"); Don ("Donn," "brown"); Orr ("Obhar," "grey"); Glass ("Glas," "light grey"); Buy ("Buidhe," "yellow"); Bain ("Bàn," "fair"); Croom ("Cròm," "bent" or "bandy-legged"). These are all Celtic names, and the parties bearing them are as much Celts as any "Mac" in the Highlands.

The last class of names to which I will advert is that of the ordinary patronymics. In the very north of the kingdom we have the Mackays, or sons of Hugh, said to be of Irish extrac-

tion, and to have been sent north by one of the earlier kings, to protect the country from the Danes. There were several branches of this clan, some in Galloway, one in Kintyre, and another in Islay—the Mackays of the Rhinns. It is a curious fact, that the only Gaelic charter known to be in existence is one conferring certain lands on these Mackays in Islay, by Donald, Lord of the Isles, and dated in 1408. It is written by Fergus Beaton, one of the celebrated physicians of that name, called generally in Gaelic "An t-ollamh Muileach." It is written in the usual form of Latin charters, but in the Gaelic language and character. This tribe crossed at a late period to Ireland, and became Magees. The earliest charters of the Mackays in Strathnaver is dated in 1499.

Another great clan is that of Mackenzie, or sons of Kenneth. The common account of their descent, as already adverted to, is, that they are descendants of the Fitzgeralds of Ireland. This account, however, has little probability in it. The first invasion of Ireland by the English took place in 1169, and the common story respecting the origin of the Mackenzies is, that after being settled in Ireland, and obtaining large possessions (one of their number holding for several years the government of the

English possessions), a member of the Fitzgerald family fought with Alexander III. at the battle of Largs, and having saved the monarch's life, had a grant of the lands of Kintail as a suitable acknowledgment, and became the founder of the Mackenzie family. It is a well-known historical fact, however, that in 1263, the period of the battle of Largs, the Irish Geraldines were engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the native Irish, more especially the M'Carthys, for their own possessions ; and nothing is more unlikely than that any one of the family could, in such circumstances, absent himself, and thus endanger the family interests. Besides, the family historians of the Geraldines make no mention whatsoever of such an individual as that referred to. An old Gaelic MS. of the seventeenth century, belonging to W. F. Skene, Esq., gives the following as the genealogy of the M'Kenzies :—Beginning with Murdoch, Lord of Kintail, the Sennachy proceeds thus—' Murchadh mac Coinnich, mhic Eoin, mhic Coinnich, mhic Aonghuis chruinn, mhic Coinnich, mhic Gilleoin òig, mhic Gilleoin mhoir, mhic Mhurchaidh, mhic Dhunchaidh, mhic Mhurchaidh, mhic Coinnich, mhic Coinn, mhic Gilleoin na h-àirde," who, according to the MS., was one of the ancestors of the Macleans. This is, how-

ever, incorrect, as Gilleoin na h-àirde was altogether a different person from Gilleoin na tuaidh, the ancestor of the M'Leans. The MS. proceeds from Gilleon na h-àirde " mhic Ruath, mhic Maolsuthain, mhic Neill, mhic Connail, mhic Ceallaigh, mhic Raine, mhic Fherchair, abhradhruaidh, mhic Baigh, mhic Fionlaidh, mhic Ferchair fad ri Albain;" thus tracing them up to Ferchair " fad," or " the tall" King of Scotland, from whom, says the MS., come the Clan Chattan, Clan Grigoir, Clan Fingon, Clan Gorrie, Clan Neil of Barray and Gigha, Clan Naughton, Clan Duffie, and M'Ginnigh. This genealogy, as will be seen, makes no reference whatever to the Fitzgeralds.

Several other clans are entitled to notice with respect to their names. The Camerons, for instance, said to derive theirs from Cambro, a Dane. The Iona Club MS. gives a different account of them. Their genealogy, as given there, is " Ewen, the son of Donald, son of Alan, son of Maelonfhaidh, son of Paul, son of Patrick, son of Martin, son of Paul, son of Maelonfhaidh, son of Neill;" and so on. There is no acknowledgment whatsoever of Cambro. The early history of this clan would seem to indicate that they are cognate with the Clan Chattan. Notice might also be taken of the Clan M'Neill and

that of M'Leod—the former manifestly a Celtic tribe; the latter having, to say the least, a number of Scandinavian names in their older genealogies. It is questionable, however, whether they are primarily a Scandinavian race. The Maclachlans and Lamonts of Cowall are well known as among the more ancient Highland tribes, and both of indisputable Celtic origin. The attempt to make the former out to be Danes, from the name of Denmark being in Gaelic Lochluinn, can hardly be made to consist with well-known facts.

But enough has been said to point out certain conclusions which seem to be well founded regarding our Scottish Celts, and to indicate certain lines of direction which our inquiries might take profitably in searching more at large into their past history. The limits proposed in these notices will not admit of anything like a history of the Highlands.

LECTURE III.

ANCIENT ECCLESIASTICAL LITERATURE OF THE HIGHLANDS—MEDICAL MSS.—THE BETHUNES AND M'LEANS—OSSIANIC POETRY, ITS GENUINENESS, ERA, AND COUNTRY.

THE subject which now presents itself to us is that of the "Ancient Literature of the Scottish Highlands." The announcement of this subject may strike some with surprise. They may be disposed to ask, "Is there such a thing?" An author writing a few years ago upon "The State of Knowledge in the Highlands," remarks that there were two enfeebling causes among the Celtic races—their disunion and their hatred of letters. If it was intended here to draw a comparison between the Celtic and Saxon races, surely so far as union or disunion was concerned there was nothing could be said disadvantageous to the Celt. There was but one kingdom in Scotland when there were no fewer than seven in Saxon England. As to their hatred for letters, such a statement is just another instance

of the ignorance and false pretension that have characterized much of the discussion in matters of Celtic antiquity.

Dr Johnson, in a well known letter of his to Dr Charles O'Connor of Belnagare, a distinguished Irish scholar, in speaking of ancient Ireland, makes use of these words :—" Dr Leland begins his history too late: the ages which deserve an exact inquiry are those times (for such there were) when Ireland was the school of the west,—the joint habitation of sanctity and literature. If you could give a history, though imperfect, of the Irish nation from its conversion to Christianity to the invasion from England, you would amplify knowledge with new views and new objects." The same writer while maintaining at one time—in speaking of the "Poems of Ossian"—that "this is the age in which those who could *not read* have been supposed to *write*, and in which the giants of antiquated romance have been exhibited as realities," could say at another, in speaking of Iona, in words sufficiently well known, " We were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, where savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion." Let these two statements

be compared, and may it not well be asked, what knowledge could have been attained without that of reading and writing? How striking an instance we have here of the power of prejudice in warping the strongest mind, and of the facility with which men, passably honest, can bring their opinions to agree with their predilections. Bede, in speaking of Ireland in the earlier centuries of the Christian era, makes it the school of the west, and relates the now well-known fact that Saxon England was indebted to Celtic Ireland for the education of her ecclesiastics. The extent to which England was indebted to Iona for its earlier enlightenment it is not easy to estimate; but this we know, that in the sixth century missionaries from that island visited the north of England, and converted the Northumbrians to the Christian faith. The probability is, that where the Modern Athens now stands, and throughout the neighbouring country, the gospel of Christ was first preached by missionaries from Iona 1200 years ago. Are we to be told that these men had no knowledge—that they could neither read nor write? The idea of the hatred of the Celtic nations for letters is one that has apparently arisen from what is understood to have been the practice among

the ancient Druids. They committed none of their instructions to writing. Their tenets were mysterious, and were confined to the chosen few. Be this, however, true or not of the Druidical Celts, it has not a particle of foundation with respect to the Christian Celts. With their old religion their old customs disappeared, and others arose in their place accordant with the religion they adopted. Nothing can be more clearly proved than that the Celtic races of this country cultivated letters, from the sixth century downwards for several centuries, to an extent unknown among their Saxon neighbours in England.

Patrick, the patron Saint of Ireland, was a Scotsman and a Celt. It is worthy of notice that while in Ireland he is spoken of as "Filius Calphurnii," being the Latinized form of his name; in the Highlands he is uniformly spoken of as "Patrick M'Alpain." In the Dean of Lismore's Gaelic MS., written about the beginning of the sixteenth century, his name almost uniformly appears in this latter form, when given in full. That Saint Patrick was a man of learning is well known. His "Confessio," or "Autobiography," sufficiently proves it; but as he spent many of his earlier years in France, he may have acquired his learning there, and

have been indebted for none of it to his native Scotland.

Columba was an Irishman, but has his fame far more linked with Scotland than with Ireland. His Celtic origin is indisputable; and we have his descent given us by most of his biographers. He is said to have been the son of Phelim, son of Fergus, grandson of Niel of the nine hostages, king of Ireland. His name among his own countrymen was Calum M'Phelim. Besides his connection with the royal family of Ireland, he was connected with that of Scotland, for his father was grandson—by the mother—of Lorn, son of Erc, one of the three brothers who founded the Dalriadic colony of Scotland. The date of Columba's birth was about A.D. 521. Columba was a man of distinguished literary attainments, and also a man whose sympathies were with the cultivation of letters. He came to Scotland in 562, and gave evidence of his love of letters by founding, not only a monastery, but a seat of learning. Of his own learning there is no want of undoubted evidence. The following quotation is from Dr Smith's "Life of Columba:"—"St Ewin, who wrote a Life of St Patrick, in the sixth century, mentions Columba as having written a Life of that saint. Wilifred, the author of the Life of St

Ciaran, and Alcuin, mention his having composed a 'Monastic Rule,' which Ware says was extant in his time; he also composed a 'Rule for Hermits,' of which Colgan says he had a copy in his possession; he also wrote a number of poems and hymns in Irish and Latin. Ten of the Irish poems were in the possession of Colgan (1647), who gives the title and first line of three of them. Of these I have seen none but his 'Farewell to the Monastery of Durrough.'" Of Columba's Latin hymns or poems Colgan has published three. A few specimens of these, from Dr Smith's translations, may be of interest; the original of one of them proceeds as follows, in a short, jerking measure, said to be taken from the measure most in use among ancient Irish composers of hymns, and adapted to the music of the ancient Irish church:—

"Noli, Pater, indulgere
Tonitrua cum fulgure
Ne frangamur formidine
Hujus atque uredine.

Ne timemus terribilem,
Nullum credentes similem—
Te cuncta canunt carmina,
Angelorum per agmina," &c.

This hymn, said to have been composed dur-

ing a thunder-storm in A.D. 550, is thus rendered into English verse by Dr Smith :—

"Gracious Father! bow Thine ear,
And our request in mercy hear,
O bid the thunder cease to roar,
And let the lightning flash no more,
Lest long in terror we remain;
Or by its stroke we should be slain.
The power supreme to Thee belongs,
Archangels laud Thee in their songs:
The wide expanse of Heaven above,
Resounds Thy glory, and Thy love.
Oh! Saviour of the human race,
Whose power is equal to Thy grace;
For ever be Thy name adored,
As King supreme, and only Lord!
To all Thy people Thou art nigh,
And oft Thy grace prevents their cry.
While in the womb the Baptist lay,
(The harbinger to pave the way;)
His soul with grace was amply stored,
To fit him to proclaim his Lord:—
May love and zeal to Thee, my God!
Have in my heart a firm abode;
O that the casket may be such,
As fits a gem so very rich."

Dr Smith gives another hymn on "The Creation, Fall of Angels, Final Judgment," &c. The original commences :—

" Altus profator, vetustus
Dierum et ingenitus
Erat absque origine
Primordio et crepidine
Est et erit in secula
Seculorum infinita,
Cui est unigenitus,
Christus et Sanctus Spiritus," &c.

Thus translated :—

" The God omnipotent, who made the world,
Is subject to no change. He was, He is,
And He shall be : th' Eternal is His name.
Equal in Godhead and eternal power
Is Christ the Son ;—So is the Holy Ghost.
These sacred glorious three are but the same,
In persons different, but one God and Lord.
This God created all the heavenly hosts :
Archangels, angels, potentates, and powers ;
That so the emanations of His love
Might flow to myriads diffusing good.
But from this eminence of glory fell
Th' apostate Lucifer, elate with pride
Of his high station and his glorious form.
Fill'd with like pride, and envying God himself,
His glory, other angels shared his fate,
While the remainder kept their happy state.
Thus fell a third of the bright heavenly stars,
Involv'd in the old serpent's guilt and fate ;
And with him suffer, in th' infernal gulf,
The loss of heaven, in chains of darkness bound," &c.

These hymns were published by Colgan, in

his "Trias Thaumaturga," in 1647, and their authenticity has not been disputed. Several lives of Columba exist, in which his learning is highly eulogized. Much of his time was spent in writing; and it is said, that when the last dread messenger approached, he was found, with pen in hand, engaged in transcribing the "Psalter." On apprehending that death was at hand, he said—referring to the work in which he was engaged,—"Let Baithen finish it; I can write no more." Columba was not only learned himself, but he was the zealous patron of learning. Wherever the influence of his teaching extended, schools were established; and to this, what may be called patron saint of the Scottish Highlands, is there reason to believe, Ireland owes not a little of her literary celebrity. It is extremely probable that in Iona was found the spring that fed the streams of early Irish literature. At least one hundred religious houses were founded by Columba in Ireland, in all of which it may safely be supposed that the schemes he approved were carried out, and the rules he established observed. After his death, Iona continued to be a seat of learning. There is clearly no exaggeration in the language of Johnson in describing its ancient state. Savage clans and roving barbarians did derive from it

the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion.

Sixty years after the death of Columba flourished his successor, Cumin,* who became the biographer of his distinguished predecessor. The biography, written in Latin, is still in existence. Twenty-three years after Cumin, flourished Adomnan, the most distinguished of Columba's biographers. His Life of the saint is a truly remarkable work, affording the most indisputable testimony to the advanced state of learning in Scotland in his time. It is not uninteresting to observe that Adomnan wrote his Life of Columba in A.D. 680, or 150 years before the time of the venerable Bede. The work is in Latin ; and, with the exception of a tendency (characteristic of the age, and which serves to establish its authenticity) to deal in miracles, is deeply interesting and instructive. Nothing could more thoroughly indicate the faithful, zealous Christian missionary than the description given of the great Apostle of Scotland. The Latin of the work, and its whole tone, are characteristic of the man of true piety and well-educated mind.* From the time of Adomnan, downwards, we have notices of the

* From whom, in all likelihood, Cill Chuimein, now Fort-Augustus, takes its Gaelic name.

literature of Iona from the Irish annalists; notices, however, so brief, that little can be made of them save the evidence they afford of the fact that there was literary culture then. In the ninth century the Northmen, to whom so much of our civilization has been attributed, made their appearance among the western isles, and indicated their love of letters, in which they have been held to be so superior to the Celts, by burning the monastery of Iona, and putting to death sixty-eight of the inmates. Three times within eight years was this seat of learning burnt by these noble Teutons, and the great luminary of the west extinguished in its own ashes. In this we have ample evidence of the love of letters which ever distinguished the Goth, while his Celtic brother cherished for them a barbarous and revolting enmity. It must be acknowledged that it is little less creditable to be of the same lineage with the learned Columba, and his no less learned and zealous successors, than of these marauders, who, without regard to letters or sanctity, carried desolation whithersoever they went.

* It is gratifying to Celtic scholars to know that an edition of this hitherto scarce work is just published for the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, with copious notes by one of the ablest living Celtic scholars, Dr Reeves of Ballymena.

With the revival of letters among the other nations of Europe, they also revived among the Celts of Scotland. Ireland, less exposed than Scotland to foreign invasion, has remains of a continuous literature from the days of St Patrick downwards. Fragments of poems, and other compositions of bards and ecclesiastics, are known to exist. From about the 12th century we have similar fragments of Celtic literature in Scotland. These are many of them transcripts from Irish MSS. One effect of the invasions of the Northmen was to extinguish the Scottish schools of learning, and to transfer the sources of education and consequent knowledge almost entirely to the sister Isle. That which had been the glory of Iona became the glory of Armagh, and similar establishments ; and Ireland, instead of sending her sons to Scotland for the acquisition of learning, became the great seat of learning herself. Hence the fact which has staggered so many with respect to the ancient literature of Celtic Scotland, that the MSS. are in the Irish dialect : the conclusion to which they have been led by this fact being, that there was no such literature in Scotland at all. But the inference was incorrect,—the existing MSS. are in the dialect of the Celtic used by literary men of both

countries; for there was such a dialect among the Celts, as there is now among the writers of English, in both this country and America. That dialect has indeed a closer resemblance to the spoken Gaelic of Ireland than that of Scotland; but this proves nothing beyond the fact, that the scholarship of the Scottish Celt was then acquired in the Irish school. It is curious, that John Carsewell, Superintendent of the Isles in 1567, writes his translation of Knox's Prayer-Book in the so-called Irish dialect; while there is no room to believe that he ever was in Ireland. Indeed, all Scottish Gaelic books are written in this dialect, down to the middle of last century,—books of whose Scottish origin there cannot be a doubt. On some of the MSS. in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library we have such notices as the following, written in the handwritting of the author or transcriber, "Is mise Eoin o Albain" ("I am John from Scotland)" "Is mise Domhnall na foghlumach Maigbeathadh" ("I am Donald Bethune the scholar)"—one of the famous Bethunes of Mull; on another, as previously quoted, "Is mise Ferghus o Albain" ("I am Fergus from Scotland);" all giving evidence that, while the dialect in use in these MSS. is what is called usually the Irish, the writers themselves were

Scotsmen. In one of these Scottish MSS. we have a transcript of a very curious and interesting MS., known in Ireland as "The Synchronisms of Flann of Bute," forming part of what is called "The Book of Ballimote." In this MS. we have lists of the kings of Ireland and Scotland within contemporaneous periods; and the age of it may be conceived, when we find that the list of Scottish kings closes with Malcolm M'Kenneth, the third king in order before Macbeth. The names of the kings, as given in this document, correspond very nearly with those given by Buchanan; and we are led to the conclusion, that the early history of Scotland, as given by that writer, is not altogether fictitious, or that at least he had some documentary evidence for the facts which he stated. It is quite possible, with regard to the history of the past, to be over-sceptical as well as over-credulous. Men have laughed very heartily, or sneered, with marvellous pretensions to superior intelligence, at historical details which the research of more industrious inquirers than they has shown to be in accordance with truth. Flann of Bute, or, as the Irish call him, Flann Mainistreach, the author of the "Synchronisms," flourished about the year 1050. The MS. in which his lists are contained, contains also

a fragment of the history of the race of Lorn, one of the founders of the Dalriadic colony, through his daughter Earc, in Ireland. This fragment is poetical, and begins—"Enna dalta Cairpre cruaidh, rogabh Tir an ena an airm ruaidh &c. ("Enna, the foster son of Cairbre the Stern, seized Tirena of the red Knights"). This MS. may be, and probably is, a copy of an Irish one; but there is no reason to believe that this is not a Scottish copy, made about the 13th century. We have several Gaelic MSS. of this kind. One, among the collection in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library, contains a treatise on the order of poets, among whom, as all students of Irish literature must know, are found seven degrees or ranks. This treatise, of which this is the only copy in Scotland, begins thus:—"Seachd grad filidh imorro, eadhon gradus grad no gradus ceim eadhon seachd ceimine na filidhsa no seachd fersaceim nigtear ri grad filidh" ("There are seven degrees among the poets, even degrees of rank or elevation, seven of these form the order of poets"). And the seven are given, as usual,—Fochloch, Macfuirmidh, Dos, Cana, Cli, Ansruth, and Ollamh; and with this list there are notices of the part of the Bardic duties that fell to each order. Another of these MSS. contains numerous legends, full

of miraculous doings of St Patrick, and other eminent saints. There is an account of the great council of Drumkeat, at which Columba attended, and at which was settled the relation which the Dalriadic kingdom of Scotland was to occupy with respect to the Irish monarchy.

Many of the legends in these MSS. speak of priests, their wives and families—corroborating what has already been said, that celibacy was unknown among the clergy of the Scottish or Irish church down to a recent period. Some of the legends they contain are headed, "Sgeul an so air mnaoi sagairt" ("Here follows a tale concerning a priest's wife"). We have also interesting fragments in theology, some of them containing long quotations from Augustin and others of the Fathers. In one there is a treatise on the Lord's Supper; and while there are some things in it from which Protestants would dissent, the views it unfolds of the manner in which a participation in that ordinance becomes a means of spiritual good, that is by faith, would command their ready assent. Another MS. contains a treatise on the ten commandments, or, as Protestants would say, nine, the second in their enumeration being excluded. It commences, "Legthar ann san naomhadh Caibdil X do leabhar Matha co tainig duine òg d

innsaighi an d-Tighearna neamhda a 'fiafri eachd de cinas do ghebhadh se an flaith-eamhnas neamhda agus cor bi fregradh tug se co cumar air: Madh ail led arse criosd feine dul cum na beathadh suthain coimhid na h-aithinte eadhon na deich n-aitheanta d-fhag mise aig Maise M'Amra agus air da chlaraibh agus ta cuid dib diultadach agus cuid eile dib daigneachdach," &c. (" It is read in the nineteenth chapter of Matthew that a young man came to our blessed Lord, asking how he might attain to the holy heaven, and that the reply he wisely gave him was, if thou desirest, said Christ himself, to enter upon eternal life, keep the commandments, even the ten commandments which I gave to Moses, son of Amram, and on two tables: and some of these are prohibitory, and some mandatory," &c). The treatise is very full, and indicates, in many places, a considerable acquaintance with Scripture, and a correct apprehension of the characteristics of a sound morality. There are two pieces of poetry in the MS., by a well-known Irish poet, Gillabride M'Conmhidhe, or Gilbert Conway, one of these beginning, " Deasgadh gach uilc an t-uabhar, trid tainic an ceud sluaghadh," &c. " The chief of evils is pride, through which came the first ruin," &c. This piece, and

the other in the MS., seem not known in Ireland, at least they are not found in O'Reilly's report on Irish writers. From the place given to Conway's poetry in the MS., it would appear as if the MS. itself was of about the same age with the poet,—the thirteenth century. It cannot be of an older date, for it was at that period the Bible was divided into chapters, and there is continual reference, in the theological portion, to the chapters of its different books; nor can it be later than the fifteenth century, since it was then the chapters were divided into verses, and to these there is no reference whatsoever.

Among existing ancient Gaelic MSS. we have several lives of saints, most of them, in all probability, transcripts from the Irish. There is one in the Advocates' Library thus transcribed—a life of St Findchua, a noted Irish saint. This MS. would appear to have been written about the year 1350.

There is another class of MSS. which cannot be passed over in any account, however brief, of ancient Celtic Literature. These are MSS. containing treatises on medical subjects, and some other relative branches of general science. Both Scotland and Ireland were distinguished for their doctors. These were men quite abreast

of the medical literature of the day. In their writings they made use of Latin and Gaelic, knowing probably no English, and were men of real culture, and versed in the science of their profession. One of these men, Ferchar Bethune, was the means of curing King Robert II. of Scotland of a painful and dangerous disease; and there is among the Scottish registers of charters a copy of a charter from that king, conveying to Bethune, as an expression of his gratitude, possession of all the islands on the west coast of Scotland, from the point of Store in Assynt, to that of Armidale in Farr. Two families of physicians were especially distinguished,—the M'Leans of Skye, and the Bethunes of Mull. Dr John M'Lean, the last of the former, was living in Skye in the time of Pennant. He, like his forefathers, was family physician to the Macdonalds. From father to son the office had descended for several generations. Modern readers may be ready to sneer at this system of hereditary bards and hereditary physicians. And yet there were good reasons for both institutions. The family bard was not only the poet, but the genealogist of the house. He was, in fact, the keeper of the family records, a register to which reference might be made in all cases of disputed succession. It was therefore of para-

mount importance that he should be well informed; and in no way was this so likely to be secured as by making the office he held hereditary; and it was well worth the while to sacrifice occasionally the poetic fire to the more prosaic, but more important, qualifications of an accurate genealogist. In like manner as to hereditary physicians, there were at the time few medical schools, if any, in the kingdom, and the only likelihood of securing physicians at all was by investing them with a hereditary office. The son might obtain in the school of his father the science and skill not to be found elsewhere, and might be led to take pains in acquiring these by the hope of succeeding to his father's office.

The Beatons or Bethunes, or, as they style themselves, M'Veaghs (M'Beths), are better known than the M'Leans. There were several branches of them. It has indeed been maintained that Cardinal Beaton was of the race. They themselves, in a family tree contained in an old MS. of theirs still in existence, trace themselves up to Neil of the nine hostages, King of Ireland. How long they were physicians cannot well be known; but they can be traced back, by means of existing documents, for 350 years from the middle of last century. The

great progenitor of the race would seem to be a certain Ferghus Fionn, or Fergus the Fair, probably the Fergus M'Veagh or Bethune who lived in the year 1408, and was physician to Macdonald of the Isles in Islay. We have several MSS. belonging to this family. One of these is a small quarto in vellum, now in possession of David Laing, Esq., of the Edinburgh Signet Library. It is in a beautiful handwriting, and seems to have been written by John Beaton, who flourished in 1530. It is full of comments on the writings of Giraldus, Constantinus, and other medical continental writers of the period. It contains also a long treatise on Astrology, so much studied at the time, and another on the phenomena of colour as an indication of health or disease. Another MS. which apparently belonged to the Beatons, contains extracts from Aristotle, under the name of "The Philosopher," from Jaques de Forli, a distinguished physician and astrologer of Padua ; from Avicenna, the Prince of Arabian physicians, and author of the Canons ; and from Averroes of Cordova, one of the best known medical writers of his day. These writings indicate an amount of cultivation in the Gaelic, to qualify it for being the language of science, from which it has sadly declined now. Many of the words used to

express the ideas of the writers would be quite unintelligible to ordinary Gaelic speakers. The vitals and extremities of the human body, for instance, are indicated severally by "na buill am fogus" and "na buill an cein," phrases which would not now be understood by ordinary speakers, either in Scotland or Ireland. We give an extract from a passage in one of these MSS., on the administering of an electuary, a form of remedy apparently very popular with the physicians of the time. The passage is headed "Nota Secundum Iacobum de Forlivio;" and proceeds, "Eadhon, Is ann a deir Jacobus de Forlivio co fuilid da modh fa tabhartar an lictubari, eadhon arson nam ball am fogus, agus nam ball a cianaibh. Arson nam ball a cein mar a ta tria sandaili don haeibh, agus diamargariton don cheann, agus pliris don inchin agus electubarium dulce eadhon lictubari milis do furtachd nan arand agus in lesa, agus diacostum an duintibh na seilge agus gach aon diubh sin is roimh an chuid dlighear an tabhairt arson ambith an cein on goile oir toirmscidh an biadh siubhal nan lictubari chum nam ball do dhlifidheas do chomhfhurtachd." ("Notes according to Jaques de Forli, viz.:—Jaques de Forli says that there are two ways of administering an electuary, according as it is if intended for the vitals or the

extremities. For the extremities there is tria sandaili for the side, and diamargariton for the head, and pliris for the brain, and sweet electuary to strengthen the parts and the bladder, and diacostum in the folds of the diaphram, and each of these is to be given before food, that they may affect the part at a distance from the stomach ; for the food prevents the moving of the electuary towards the parts which it is necessary to invigorate.") This is a specimen of the writing of these medical men, and although their practice may not be in accordance with the views now held by the profession on the same subjects, it was not a whit behind their own age. On one of these MS. being shown to a distinguished medical man of the present day, he had pointed out to him that portion in which the subject of colour is discussed as entering into the matter of medical diagnosis. The different colours, from deadly pale to the intensest flush, are described, and the inference to be drawn from each as to the state of a patient minutely described. He remarked that it was an extremely interesting document, and that that very subject was at the time occupying much of his own attention, as one whose importance had been in some measure overlooked. There are in these MSS. several collections of recipes

óf a very curious kind, including among them, pounded herbs of various kinds, egg-shells, and similar substances, along with the scientific pharmacopœia of the period fully known and applied according to the rules of art. One is curious to know where some of the materials of this pharmacopæia could be found. Were there apothecaries in Skye and Mull? Or were these articles had from Dublin and Edinburgh? Be that as it may, it is manifest that, so far as medical science was concerned, these regions were not behind their age during the period of the Beatons. There being a sort of regal court in the Hebrides may account for the existence of this fact, at least to a certain extent.

Some of the Gaelic MSS. existing contain curious metaphysical and mathematical speculations. There is one curious little volume in the Library of the Edinburgh Advocates, of about two inches long, and an inch and a half in breadth and thickness, bound together with thongs, of considerable interest on this account. It would appear to have been possessed by one of the Beatons. On a page in the middle is written :—" Is e so leabhar Neil òig" (" This is Neil the younger's book") ; and we find the name of Neil òg in the genealogical tree of the Beatons. The writer, however, has, as is common

in Gaelic MSS., inscribed his name on several of the pages.—"Mise M'Illain, M' an Leich" ("I am M'Lean, the son of the Physician"). One might be disposed, at first sight, to claim this curious little volume for one of the Skye M'Leans; but the knowledge that there was an Irish physician of eminence, whose name was M'Illain M' an Leich, is sufficient to prove that the MS. is an Irish one. It had, however, been manifestly in the possession of the Beatons. The first portion is taken up with copious extracts from the "Latin Psalter;" then follow some prayers; and the last part of the work is metaphysical and medical. The following are extracts from its contents:—"Is sphera comhlan Dia aig a fuil a shentrum anns gach aon ionad agus a cheither thimchioll gun bhi an ionad idir" ("God is a perfect sphere, whose centre is everywhere, and its circumference nowhere"). Or, "Is sphera corp daignichte egin aig a fuil eumallach amhain is ann an medhin sin pong trid an tredritear gach aon line dinnsaighe nasphera timchioll, agus is ris an pong sin a deirear sentrum na sphera, agus ris an line a shiubhlas trid sentrum na sphera innsaighe an da fir imill as e a deirear aisi lna sphera agus an da phonug anns an crichnachear an aisil a deirear da pholus an domhan riu" ("A

sphere is a solid body, having a surface all round a point within, through which all lines pass down from point to point in the surface, which point is called the centre ; and the line drawn through the centre to the surface in both directions is called the axle of the sphere ; and the two points in which the axle terminates are called the poles, as of the earth," &c.). This little volume is full of similar passages, chiefly like those, composed of quotations from the schoolmen of the Continent, but containing also comments of the writer himself. The quotations are usually in Latin ; but there are Gaelic translations, and the comments are all in Gaelic. But what is worthy of notice, and creditable to the scholarship of Ireland and the Scottish Highlands at an early period, is, that at the time when Latin was the only language of the learned throughout the rest of Europe, there the vernacular of the people—that language which has been held up as the rude speech of a barbarous people—was used in discussing scientific subjects in a way altogether worthy of the state of science at the time. We have been so accustomed to associate the past history of the Highlands with the feuds and squabbles, the raids and murders, of a barbarous people, that we are apt to forget that there were any in-

habitants in the country at all but a set of restless and turbulent chiefs, with their savage and unscrupulous followers. But the facts of history indicate, what indeed has all the aspect of probability, that even amidst these tumults there moved an enlightened clergy and a body of well-educated physicians, each in their own sphere, as we may believe, restraining and modifying the force and asperity of feudal animosity. There was a Church always in the Highlands; and much as we may differ with some of the tenets held by the Church of the middle ages, we cannot but suppose that some of those having the name of its ministers were in a measure worthy of that name. Some of them would have been so morally—nor could they have been altogether destitute of literature. Indeed, the existing remains of our ancient Celtic literature seem to show that, had the literature of the Gaelic language not been checked in its growth, and finally well-nigh extinguished by the rising literature of the dominant kingdom England, it would by this time have developed itself into dimensions which would have allowed no room for the sneer—"You have no literature!" The Celts had a vernacular literature before any other of the nations of modern Europe; and there was nothing but their untoward circum-

stances with regard to the rising literature of England which prevented its growth. It may be here added, that the written character in use among the Gaelic races is that which both they and the Saxons obtained from the Romans; and that its introduction, both into Scotland and Ireland, must have been contemporaneous with the appearance of the Christian faith.

But in discussing the question of the ancient literature of the Scottish Celts their early poetry cannot be overlooked, and on this subject the name and the compositions of Ossian present themselves almost unbidden. In passing the subject of the Ossianic poetry, and its claims, briefly under review, we are at once brought into contact with three questions—Is this poetry genuine? if so, what was the age of its composition? and is it Scotch or is it Irish? The writer of these notices does not pretend to be able to answer these questions in a way to leave no room for doubt. They are questions which have been discussed by some of the ablest literary men of this and other countries; and it is hardly to be expected that questions which they left unsettled he has it in his power to settle. The men who really could settle some of the points in dispute finally, are long passed away from the stage of life. Macpherson and his compeers

are for more than half a century at their final rest, and the race of bards and sennachies in the Highlands, from whose lips the traditional poetry of the country might be gathered anew, are passed away with the system that nurtured them. There is, however, still something that may be said on the subject, it is hoped to aid in its elucidation.

A little after the middle of last century, the literary world of Britain was surprised by the appearance of a little volume, entitled "Fragments of Ancient Poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Earse language." The name of the collector did not appear on the title page. In the introduction to the volume, the following words appear, "The public may depend on the following fragments as genuine remains of ancient Scottish poetry. The date of their composition cannot be easily ascertained; tradition, in the country where they were written, refers them to an era of the most remote antiquity, and this tradition is supported by the spirit and strain of the poems themselves, which abound with those ideas, and paint those manners, that belong to the most early state of society." This was the language of James Macpherson in 1760, and before he had any inducement to attempt decep-

tion by the knowledge of the high value which the public of the kingdom had set upon his collections. Here, then, we would undoubtedly expect to find genuine Gaelic poetry,—nor have we reason to think that the fact is otherwise. At page 26 of the second edition of the book, we have a piece, of which a Gaelic edition exists in what is known as the Dean of Lismore's MS., taken down about A.D. 1520. Its name among the Highlanders is "Fainesoluis," or the "Beam of Light." It proceeds thus: "Son of the noble Fingal, Ossian, prince of men! What tears run down the cheek of age, what shades thy mighty soul? Memory, son of Alpin, memory wounds the aged. Of former times are my thoughts; my thoughts are of the noble Fingal. The race of the king return into my mind and wound me with remembrance." There are slight differences between the edition of Dean M'Gregor and that of Macpherson, but in point of apparent completeness and general literary excellence, the advantage is in favour of the older edition. This piece is well known among Gaelic scholars ;. but still it is desirable to establish, and it can be established, that it is not Macpherson's, nor a translation from the English, but a genuine fragment of ancient Gaelic poetry, known to have existed in the Gae-

lic language in the early part of the sixteenth century. In these earlier fragments the editor retained all the Irishisms introduced into them during the course of centuries, and which are as frequent in some of these as repeated in the Highlands, as they are in Ireland. Thus the poet is introduced as addressing St Patrick under the name of "M'Alpin," or "the Son of Alpin;" although there is a manifest attempt to conceal that the Irish saint is meant. These addresses are obviously interpolations of the Irish bardic school, in which so many of our Scottish bards were trained; but their introduction by Macpherson was clear evidence of the honesty displayed by him as an editor.

This earlier collection, on its appearance, served but to whet the public appetite, and Macpherson aided this effect, by saying that there was an immense deal more of the same kind of poetry throughout the Highlands, which might be collected, but which, if not collected then, would, from the rapid changes taking place among the people, be lost for ever. The consequence was, that money was contributed, and Macpherson commissioned by an association of gentlemen in Edinburgh, of which Dr Blair was the leading member, to proceed without delay with the work of collecting. If Macpherson, at

any period, became more than a collector, and added to the collection he had made compositions of his own, this was the period at which it was likely he might be induced to do so. There is nothing in his original publication to indicate the slightest unfairness; and that the fragments in that publication are of more than ordinary merit, is manifest from the sensation they excited in the world of literature; yet it is quite conceivable how a man, possessed of no very strict sense of what was due to perfect honesty, might feel an almost irresistible temptation to sustain, if not to increase, the sensation he had excited already. Macpherson proceeded with his mission, and the result was soon laid before the public in a volume of English translations from the Gaelic, known as the "Poems of Ossian." The first effect was startling. Never was the admiration of the British public more loudly or lavishly expressed. Edition after edition was sold, and in a few years the Highland schoolmaster became a Highland proprietor. Nor was the admiration confined to Britain. The plaudits of Britain were re-echoed over the Continent of Europe; and hardly were the poems published in London, until translations were made into French, Italian, German, and Latin. And this effect was not

the mere outburst of a momentary enthusiasm: thirty years after their original publication, the Emperor Napoleon was an ardent admirer of these compositions; so much so, indeed, that it is commonly related, that he generally went to bed with a copy of Ossian under his pillow; and that he fed his military enthusiasm by a study of its pages. Nor is this surprising. Irrespective of all questions as to their genuineness, we have, in the Poems of Ossian, some of the finest pieces of composition in any language. What pictures of desolation! Never did painter, with all the resources of genius and art, surpass, seldom equal them. For instance, "Autumn is dark on the mountains. Grey mist rests on the hills. The whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark rolls the river through the narrow plain. A tree stands alone on the hill, and marks the slumbering Connal. The leaves whirl round with the wind and strew the graves of the dead. At times are seen here the ghosts of the departed when the musing hunter alone stalks over the heath." And nowhere are there finer descriptions of a warrior than here,—"A rougher blast rushed through the oak. The dream of night departed. Gaul took his aspen spear. He stood in the rage of his soul. Often did his eyes turn to the east He accused the

lagging light. At length the morning came forth. The hero lifted up the sail. The winds came rustling from the hill. He bounded on the waves of the deep." Nor is there within the range of poetry anything more simply majestic than the "Address to the Sun," a fragment, of whose genuineness there can be no doubt, and which, were no other compositions of his extant, should give Ossian a place among the first of poets. In Gaelic it commences:—

"O thusa, a ghrian a shiubhlas shuas," &c.

But we give the translation of Macpherson:—

"Oh thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O Sun? Thy everlasting light? Thou comest forth in thine awful beauty; the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon, pale and cold, sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone. Who can be a companion of thy course? The oaks of the mountains fall; the mountains themselves decay with years; the ocean shrinks and grows again; the moon herself is lost in heaven; but thou art for ever the same, rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests, when thunder rolls and lightning flies, thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian

thou lookest in vain, for he beholds thy beams no more, whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern clouds or thou tremblest at the gate of the west. But thou art perhaps like me for a season,—thy years will have an end. Thou shalt sleep in thy clouds, careless of the rise of the morning. Exult, then, Sun, in the strength of thy youth! Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills. The blast of the north is on the plain, the traveller sinks in the midst of his journey."

This is genuine Ossianic poetry, seen, no doubt, through the medium of a translation. It is, at least, not the poetry of Macpherson, for hundreds of Highlanders could repeat it before he was born. But these works are full of fine poetry; poetry which, it must be acknowledged, has sunk under the mere weight of public suspicion. Whether this fact is a creditable one or not, is a question on which there would very probably be a difference of opinion; yet surely it is not too much to expect that the works themselves should have the place due to them, irrespective of their authorship. Notwithstanding all the obloquy that has been passed on them, however, it is very manifest that these composi-

tions have exercised a powerful influence on modern literature. It was but a few weeks before his lamented death that the writer of these sentences met the late Hugh Miller in one of the streets of Edinburgh. In the course of conversation Mr Miller asked him whether he agreed in the opinion of Lord Neaves, as expressed in a paper read before the British Archæological Institute, that these poems were Irish, and not Scotch. Having stated what he thought on the subject, Mr Miller remarked, "Well, Scotch or Irish, authentic or not, these poems gave its character to the poetry of modern Europe." Such was the opinion of a man as competent as any other in this kingdom to give a judgment on such a question.

But to the question of their authenticity. No sooner were the Poems of Ossian before the world, than surmises arose in several quarters, and these not of the most flattering kind, on the subject of their authenticity. These became gradually louder and louder, until it came to be stoutly maintained in the literary circles both of London and Edinburgh, that the whole was an impudent forgery, and that these poems were the composition of James Macpherson. The opposite side of the question was at once taken up, and as strenuously maintained; and a

controversy arose, not very creditable either to the good temper or good manners of the combatants. We can hardly form an idea, at this distance of time, of the bitterness with which the war raged. It was more like one of the ancient clan fights of the Highlands than anything associated with civilization and intelligence. It was a combat in which nothing would seem to satisfy either party but the very blood of their opponents. It was, to use a Highland expression, striving to get the length of the dirk into each other. Everything was dragged into the conflict that possibly could, however it might serve to display personal and national rancour more than argument. It was something to wound the feelings of an adversary, if nothing else could be done. At one time it was a pitched battle between England and Scotland, at another between the Highlands and the Lowlands. National prejudices and antipathies helped largely to swell the tide of battle. Johnson, who travelled into Scotland for the purpose of being able to speak with some authority on the subject, and who cordially hated Macpherson, struck hard on his return, and was retaliated upon, if not with equal power, at least with equal heart. It was discovered, or thought to be so, that his grandfather had been hanged

for some misdemeanour; and this was hurled at him with tremendous energy and earnestness as a most potent weapon of defence for the genuineness of Ossian, and destruction for all his adversaries. A Highlander of the name of Shaw, who wrote a grammar and dictionary of the Gaelic language,—a kind of deserter from Scotland and Presbyterianism, although at one time a Presbyterian minister,—joined with Johnson in his assault, pretending to possess extraordinary advantages in coming to a judgment on the question from his knowledge of the Gaelic language. He had all sorts of attacks made on him. The meanness of his birth,—mistakes both in his grammar and dictionary,—a wish to curry favour with Johnson for the sake of promotion in the English Church;—all these things were charged upon him with hearty good-will, and perhaps with the feeling that he deserved a great deal more as an apostate. In fact, the controversy became a contemptible squabble, calling forth the worst national prejudices, although embracing more or less within its range the names of such men as Hume, Gibbon, Sir John Sinclair, Laing, Pinkerton, Blair, Adam Ferguson, and Bishop Percy. It finally wore itself out, and died apparently of exhaustion about the year 1806.

As might be expected in all this, truth met but scurvy treatment; and undoubtedly the ghost of poor old Ossian might have looked down from his cloud with as much gloom as might have served for a dozen of his departed heroes. The Irish joined in the cry against Macpherson, and became as Joseph's brethren to their brother Celt. They could not extend their sympathy even to the same race beyond the borders of the Green Isle, and could give no credit for anything great or good, even to Celts, save the Celts of Ireland. And where was the truth all this time? As usual, in similar circumstances, it lay pretty much between the combatants, but not perceived by either very distinctly amidst the din and the dust of controversy. It was an extraordinary amount of faith in any Highlander to believe that an epic poem like "Fingal," in six books, had been handed down by tradition for 1600 years. There was some little indication upon their part of a desire to take credit for so creditable a fact, without inquiring very minutely into the evidence which went to support it. It is hardly credible that Macpherson found the poem of "Fingal" as he gives it in his collection; nay, I doubt that any Highlander ever heard of such a poem as "Fingal" at all; and yet there is

little room to doubt that a large portion of "Fingal" is genuine Ossianic poetry. The description of Cuchullin's chariot, for instance, one of the most brilliant and graphic pieces of description in the work, is unquestionably ancient. It has been taken down from the recitation of the natives in every corner of the Highlands. It is a fragment of precisely the same character with another well known in the Highlands, describing the swords of the Fingalians, beginning :—

"B'i an Drithleannach lann Oscair
B'i a chruaidh-chosgarrach lann Chaoilte," &c.

"The sparkling blade was Oscar's sword,
The fierce destroyer was that of Caoilt," &c.

The resemblance between these two pieces, the latter not given by Macpherson, indicates their derivation from the same origin. There are other poems in Macpherson's compilation undoubtedly ancient; as, for example, "Carthonn." Much of this poem can be produced in MS., taken down three hundred years ago.

Much, as against Macpherson, was made at the time of the written originals of these poems never having been produced. It is somewhat surprising that so much weight was attached to this objection. It serves to remind us of the couplet regarding General Wade's roads :—

" If you had seen these roads before they were made,
You would lift up your hands and bless General Wade."

The fact is, that while Macpherson found several ancient MSS. containing pieces of Ossianic poetry, the poems never existed to any great extent save among the oral recitations of the people. They were floating fragments, as were probably the poems of Homer, for many long years before they were committed to writing. Tradition is quite capable of preserving such fragmentary compositions. Last year (1856) one thousand lines of different pieces of Ossianic poetry were taken down from the lips of an old woman (a Janet Sutherland) in Caithness, by Mr James Cumming, a student in the New College of Edinburgh*. The writer has a copy of these in his possession; and nothing is more remarkable than their coincidence with the fragments in the Dean of Lismore's MS., taken down 330 years before. It affords a complete reply to all the objections urged against the poetry of Ossian, founded on the impossibility of such compositions being handed down for any length of time by mere tradition. In the absence of writing, it is hard to say what the human memory is capable of accomplishing.

* This was done at the suggestion of the Rev. John Mackay of Lybster.

It has no doubt its limits ; but we are in modern times without data from which to conclude definitely how far these limits may extend, and this without detriment to what has been said regarding " Fingal." After all this, however, Macpherson was undoubtedly more than the mere editor of these poems. He exercised an amount of discretion which perhaps served to lay him open to the charges to which he became afterwards exposed, and which rendered it difficult for his friends to defend either Ossian or himself. He pieced together the floating fragments which he gathered throughout the Highlands—interspersed them to some extent with his own compositions—changed names, when that suited his purpose, and expunged portions that were inconsistent with his favourite theories. He took liberties, which however other editors have taken to at least as large an extent, without being loaded with the obloquy which was heaped on Macpherson ; for it is true that, notwithstanding all Macpherson did as an editor, we have in these poems numerous and extensive remains of genuine Ossianic poetry ; and certainly the spirit of the whole is that of Ossian, and not of Macpherson. The whole works are of the true type of the ancient heroic poetry of the Scottish Highlands.

The era of these poems it is far from easy to

determine. The Irish say they are of the age of Cormac M'Art, King of Ireland in the third century, when Fingal was leader of the Irish militia. It would require an amount of evidence not yet produced to show that Ireland had a militia in the third century; at least it would be necessary, along with such a statement, that a definition should be given of what a militia really meant. If the second or third century were the era of Fingal, his son Ossian could not have been a contemporary of St Patrick in the fifth century. And yet in all the remains of Irish Fenian poetry St Patrick is introduced generally in colloquy with the bard. The Irish accounts of those compositions do not certainly hang very well together.

In reading these poems, it is impossible not to be struck with the resemblance which their story often presents to those common to the mythology of Greece and Rome. Fionn, or Fingal, is just another Hercules,—his famous sword very much like Hercules' club. In Loinn MacLiobhaidh, the celebrated smith of the Fenian heroes, and the maker of Fingal's sword, we have another Vulcan, with his own characteristics, no doubt, as might have been anticipated,—for he could cross a valley at a stride, and make a sword that never required to give

a second blow. This blacksmith is obviously a myth; for his name translated is "Brightness, the son of Polishing," referring manifestly to the polishing of the steel. Many of the Finggalian stories have their prototypes, or their synonymes among the oriental nations. One of them, that of Cuchullin, and his son Conlaoch, is just the well-known Persian story of Rustum and Zohrab. Another, that of Fraoch, is identical with the story of Hercules and the garden of the Hesperides. May it not be that these Celtic stories stretch back into the remotest antiquity, and that they were, during their migrations from the East, the popular national tales of the Celts—or, have they rather, in more modern times, been mere adaptations from the mythology of the Greeks and Romans, carried into these western regions along with their literature? A large portion of the Ossianic poetry is taken up with the contest between the Celts and the Scandinavians, probably during the invasion by the latter of the shores of Scotland and Ireland. There were no doubt very early invasions of these kingdoms by the Northmen. Yet the earliest authentic account of these is in the ninth century. In one of the fragments mention is made of a place called Cliabhan as the scene of a battle with the

Danes ; this place is found in Caithness, on the very borders of the ancient Scandinavian settlements of the country. There is among the natives a tradition of a battle having been fought there, and remains indicative of sepulture at a very remote period are also discovered in the neighbourhood. But we have no reason to believe that the Danes formed any settlements in Caithness before the ninth century, and the necessary inference is, that this poem (" Dán air Crom Ghleann," given in M'Callum's collection, p. 106), which bears every mark of authenticity, is of a period not earlier than that century. The probability is, that these fragments are of various dates, and various authors ; some of them, it may be, as ancient as the period of the Romans, and some of them as late as the invasion of the Danes, and some even later, while fragments may be of an antiquity higher than the introduction of Christianity. Internal evidence indicates those fragments which belong to what is usually called the Ossianic era, or the second or third century. That the names of the Fingalians, and the memory of their feats, existed at a very early period in Scotland, can be very satisfactorily established. Besides the reference to them in the more ancient Scottish poets their names occur in our

charters. The term "Tubernafein" occurs in a charter of lands in Morayshire, dated in 1220. The name is explained in the charter as meaning the well of the great or Kempis men. At that time the name of the Fingalians was obviously a thing of great antiquity. Indeed it is probable that there was not a word of Gaelic spoken in the district where the well occurs for two centuries before the date of the charter. We have thus Fingalian names and prowess celebrated so early as the eleventh century, and that upon the unquestionable evidence of a charter.

The Irish origin of these poems has been much insisted on of late years. Indeed, the question of their authenticity seems to have passed into a question regarding the country to which they belong. The answer to this question most consistent with existing evidence is, that they belong both to Scotland and Ireland. They were the common inheritance of the race. Everything that can be said in favour of their being Irish can be said with equal truth in favour of their being Scotch. There were "Feinn Erin" (Irish Fingalians), as well as "Feinn Albain" (Fingalians of Scotland); both countries were the scenes of their exploits; in both countries are there traditional stories regarding

them; the poems celebrating their deeds were recited in both; and in both is the topography largely distinguished by the names of their remarkable men. There is this, however, in favour of Scotland, that a much larger portion of the poetry of the Fingalians has been retained by the people than in Ireland, while it has also more distinct marks of antiquity. In the volume published by the Messrs MacCallum of Montrose, and which admits of none of the objections urged against either Mr Macpherson or Dr Smith, there is a far larger amount of Ossianic poetry than could be collected in Ireland by means of transcribing from the recitation of the peasantry; and let it be borne in mind that this collection was merely supplementary to that of Mr Macpherson and Dr Smith. But it is of no use dogmatizing on this subject; all that is intended to be said is, that Scotland has at least as good a claim to these compositions as Ireland, while perhaps there might be no mistake in saying that in some respects her claim is better. But there is really no need to quarrel about the matter. Let both nations strive to rescue from dishonour the name of a noble old poet, and bring the world back from its somewhat unworthy prejudice to the honest belief that "Fingal fought, and that Ossian sang."

LECTURE IV.

GAELIC ETYMOLOGY—THE DIFFICULTIES ATTENDING IT—PROSE WORKS IN GAELIC SINCE THE DISCOVERY OF PRINTING—MODERN GAELIC POETRY, WITH NOTICES OF THE AUTHORS—JACOBITE POETRY—RELIGIOUS POETRY—LYRICAL POETRY—CONCLUDING REMARKS.

We now proceed to give some notices of the more modern literature of the Scottish Highlands. This subject would naturally divide itself into two branches: a sketch of the few prose works which have appeared since the discovery of printing, and the more abundant poetical compositions which have been produced by the modern bards. But ere proceeding to these, there is a subject of a cognate character which cannot well be overlooked,—the subject of etymology, in reference to the Gaelic names of places and persons. This is, indeed, the only kind of Celtic literature which many of our modern Highlanders seem disposed to study. The name of a village or a hill, a glen or a river, often gives rise to the

most earnest and lengthened discussions, in which there is abundant room for the exercise of imagination, and not a little for very resolute asseveration. It is astonishing how much time a gathering of Highlanders will spend in discussing the etymology of a name. It is generally thought that, for this kind of study, any man possessing ordinary knowledge of the Gaelic language is amply qualified, and that a little twisting and untwisting of words, which any man can accomplish, is all that is necessary to bring forth a satisfactory result. If these analysts be correct in most of their surmises, their forefathers must have been the clumsiest of mortals, and the most indifferent as to grammar in forming their names. They must have exercised no little ingenuity in selecting the collocation of terms least in consonance with the genius of their own language. The fact is, of all our studies, that of etymology is the least satisfactory, and merits having least confidence reposed in it; or if it be at any time satisfactory, it is in the hands of our very best scholars. To be a good etymologist, besides a sound judgment, requires a thorough knowledge of the language whose words have to be analysed, and that during the different periods of its history; for no-

thing is plainer than that languages undergo perpetual change. He must also have an accurate acquaintance with the history of the country in which the words occur. It is astonishing how the knowledge of a historical fact often overturns the speculations of a whole host of etymologists, who have nothing but their fancy to which to trust. We would do well to carry these ideas with us in our study of Celtic etymology. Although not, then, having much confidence in etymological speculations, let us for a little glance at our Gaelic names as a subject of some literary interest.

Many of the Gaelic names of places in Scotland are derived from those of the men of renown of bypast ages, whether mythical or real. Thus the name of Fingal is bound up with much of the topography of the country. We have his burial-place in Killin, at the west end of Loch Tay; a curious fact, seeing that "Kil" is an ecclesiastical term for a place of worship, derived from the Latin "Cella." This would seem to bring the interment of Fingal within the Christian period. We have Ossian's name also frequently in our topography, as in "Clach Oisiain," "Uaimh Oisiain;" the former meaning Ossian's stone, the latter his grave. Wherever their lives were spent, tradition places the death

both of Fingal and Ossian in the Highlands of Scotland. Then we have other Fingalian heroes similarly commemorated, as "Gorrie," in all probability, in the River Garry, Glengarry, and Lochgarry. "Conan" is commemorated in Strathconan, and the River Conan; "Carthon," in Lochcarron, and the different rivers Carron throughout the country. This might mean the winding stream, were it not for the loch bearing the name, a name that might be derived from the river, although it is hardly likely.

Carrol is commemorated in the rock of Carrol in Sutherlandshire. Eire, one of the ancient deities of the Celts, is commemorated in Aldéire (Auldearn), Strathéire (Strathdearn and Strathearn). This word is probably the origin of the name Eire for Ireland; and not Iarinn, as generally supposed. We have the name of Gaul in Loch Goil. Other names of note, although not of the Fingalian race, are commemorated; as Cullain, said by Irish scholars to have been a Druid of great fame. There are numerous hills in Ireland bearing the designation of "Sliabh Chullain" (Cullin's Mountain), derived from this person. The Cullin Hills in Skye have probably their name from the same source. Then we have Laoman Mac-Laighne, another hero of Celtic antiquity, com-

memorated, in all probability, in Ben Lomond, Loch Lomond, and the Lomond Hills of Fife. The name Tummel, applied to a lake and river in Perthshire, is also in all likelihood that of a man.

Besides these names commemorative of persons, many of our Highland names are descriptive. This would, indeed, seem to be the character of the great mass of names given by the aborigines of any country. The names of the Highland mountains are for the most part of this class. Thus,—"Beinn Neimhais" (Ben Nevis), "the fierce-looking mountain," a name applicable to the mountain, the glen, the river, and the loch, which bear it. These are all found among the grandest natural objects in the kingdom. "Ben Uais" (Ben Wyvis), "the noble mountain;" the name Uais occurring in "Colla Uais," the great ancestor of the Macdonalds. "Beinn Labhar" or "Leobhar," "the broad mountain;" "Carn gorm," "the blue mountain;" "Monadh Liath," "the grey hills." Other names besides those of mountains are descriptive; thus,—"Gleann eilge" (Glenelg), "the glen of beauty;" the word "eilge" being the same as in "Innis eilge," "the isle of beauty," one of the poetical names for Ireland. This word "ealga" or "eilge" appears also in the name "Elgin," which means "the place of

beauty,"—no unfit appellation. "Gleann ruaidh," "the red glen," or "the glen of the deer;" "Gleann Mòr," "the great glen;" "Srath ghlais" (Strathglass), "the green valley;" "Srath spè," "the winding valley;" the "spè" or spèach" being applied primarily to the river.

A large class of our Gaelic names of localities is ecclesiastical, like many of the names of persons. These are commemorative sometimes of foreign, and sometimes of native, saints. The names of foreign saints we have in such words as "Cilltaraglan" (Kiltarlity), "the church of St Heraclius;" "Cillmhartain (Kilmartin), "the church of St Martin"—St Martin of Tours no doubt. The names of native saints we have in such cases, are "Cillcholumchille" (Kilcolmkill), "the church of St Columba;" "Cillphadruig" (Kilpatrick), "the church of St Patrick;" "Cillbhrannan" (Kilbrandon), "the church of St Brannan;" "Cillchomain" (Kilchoman), "the church of St Comgan;" "Cillchòain" (Kilchoan); "Cillbhrìd" (Kilbride); "Cillmhòraig" (Kilmorack); "Cillchatain" (Kilchattan). These names are too numerous to have them all given here, although a complete list of them would be a real addition to our archæological knowledge; but one thing, in passing from them, is well worthy of obser-

vation,—that these do not at all correspond with similar names in Ireland; that much as is said of the identity of the church of Iona with the Irish church,—the Irish, in fact, claiming every abbot of the monastery but one,—the Scottish calendar of saints differs very widely indeed from that of Ireland.

Another large class of Gaelic names is commemorative of events in the past history of the Highlands; as,—"Bà na fola," "the bloody bay," in Mull; "Beinn a chaoinidh," "the mountain of weeping," in Perthshire, said to be commemorative of the lamentation after a great battle fought in the valley of the Earn; "Tuttaim tairbh," "the abundant falling," commemorative of the numbers who fell in a great battle between the men of Sutherland and the Mackays of Strathnaver. These names are very numerous, and can only be explained by a minute acquaintance with the past history of the country. As to many of these, and others besides, the real etymology is undoubtedly for ever lost, and we are merely expending time and labour unnecessarily in looking for it.

But let us pass from this subject to give a few notices of our modern Gaelic literature. By modern is meant such literature as has appeared in the country since the discovery of the art of

printing. It has been already said, that so far as prose writing is concerned this is very scanty; and it may be added, that the greater portion of what exists is composed of translations from the English. The earliest work printed in Gaelic is what is generally known as Bishop Carsewell's Prayer-book. It is a translation of John Knox's Liturgy, or "Forms of Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, intended to be Models and Helps for Ministers in the Performance of their Public Duties." The translation is by Mr John Carsewell, appointed one of the order of superintendents instituted in connection with the early Reformed Church of Scotland, and afterwards made Bishop of the Isles. Carsewell's district, as superintendent, was the ancient bishopric of the Isles; and although his memory is not held in much respect among the Western Highlanders, he seems to have been a zealous, painstaking man, really interested in promoting the wellbeing of his countrymen. He was accused of parsimony in his day, but the real reason of his unpopularity was probably the little relish many of his countrymen had for the doctrines of Protestantism. That he was a sincere Protestant appears from passages in the dedication of his work to the Earl of Argyll. In one portion of this dedication he

says to the Earl, "All thine efforts, my Lord, through the Holy Spirit, and thy knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, have prospered in despite of opposition, viz.,—the destruction of superstition and indifference, the burning of images, putting down of evil example, and levelling and overturning altars, and places where lying offerings are made, besides uprooting thieves and wicked people, and all oppressors, and with that helping and encouraging the Christian church." Several extracts from this book have been published, so that portions of it are well known, especially those references which are made to the existence of the poetry of Ossian, and the practice of reciting it common among the people of the Highlands. The following extract, however, has not been otherwise transcribed, and is interesting, as showing the state of literature in the Highlands in Carsewell's day (1657). Speaking of the difficulties he had to encounter,—"Is tearc neach agabfuil ceart canamhna na gaoidheilge agus ni nalbain amhain acht Anerind fein acht mara bfuil sé ag beagan daois ealadhna mhaith re ḋán agas re seanchus agas ag méidigin do mhacaibh maith leighind agas arnadhbharsin da bfaghadh saoi re healadhain locht sgriobhtha no deachtaidh sa leabhar bheagsa gabhadh se

mo leithsgelsa or ni dhearrna mè saothar na foghluim sa ngaoidhleig acht amhain mar gach nduine don pobal choitchind." ("There are but few who know the Gaelic language well in Scotland, and even in Ireland. This knowledge is confined very much to a few old poets and relaters of history, and a few men of education and letters; wherefore, if any Gaelic scholar should perceive defects in either the writing or composition of this little volume, let him forgive me, for I have never studied the language, nor have I any knowledge of it beyond that possessed by the common people.") This volume of Carsewell's was printed at Edinburgh in 1567, four years before anything whatsoever was printed in the Irish language in Ireland, and, as will be observed, very soon after printing became known at all. The printer was Lekprevik, who is known as having been the first printer of Buchanan's History of Scotland. The dialect of Gaelic used by Carsewell is that commonly known as the Irish, but which, as has already been said, was common to the writers of both countries. It is manifest that Carsewell did not acquire this dialect in Ireland; for we have no reason to believe that he ever visited Ireland; and his saying that he knew nothing of the Gaelic but what was current in the country,

shows that the possession of this dialect was not in itself an evidence of very high scholarship, but was somewhat common among the people. It stood related to the vernacular of the Scottish Highlands, and of much of Ireland, just as the English of literature stands related to the common language of Scotland, and of much of England. It was manifestly a relic of the ancient literary cultivation of Iona and the schools of the Irish church.

The next book we meet with after "Carsewell's Liturgy," is a translation of "Calvin's Catechism," printed in 1631, by Wreitton, a well-known Edinburgh printer. One copy alone of this work is known to exist, and is in the hands of David Laing, Esq., of the Edinburgh Signet Library. The execution of this translation bears a strong resemblance to that of the former; and although Carsewell was dead for many years in 1631, when it was printed, there is strong internal evidence that the work was by him. We are led also to this conclusion by a statement of Carsewell's own, in his preface to his "Liturgy," to the effect that if that effort were to be successful, he proposed devoting his time and energies to other works of a similar kind.

In 1650 the Synod of Argyll published a metrical translation of the first eighty of the

Gaelic Psalms,—a work we will notice here, although not coming under the class of prose works. In this little volume the so-called Irish dialect is still in use, and several interesting notices are given in the preface, more especially as to the character of the sacred music then in use. Next followed the whole Psalter, Kirke of Balquidder's Psalter, and several editions of the Shorter Catechism.

In 1750 appeared the first work ever published in the Scottish dialect of the Gaelic—"Baxter's Call to the Unconverted," translated by the Rev. Alexander M'Farlane, minister of Kilninver in Argyleshire. This work is interesting as the production of a native of the very same district of the Highlands with Carsewell, who wrote 200 years before in the other dialect.

The most important work, however, of the kind under review to which we have to advert is the translation into Gaelic of the Holy Scriptures. About the year 1690 three thousand copies of Bedell's Irish Bible were printed in the Roman character, for the benefit of the Scottish Highlanders. In many parts of the Highlands this was the Bible which continued long in use among the people; and, along with the English Bible, from which some ministers and others translated as they read—often very in correctly

—was the only means of access the people had to the truths of the Divine word. Many of the Highlanders could indeed read the Irish letter. They called it "A chorra litir," from its abbreviations; and some of them could write it fluently. The writer of these lectures has seen several specimens of admirable writing of this kind of so late a date as the beginning of last century. One specimen is of remarkable beauty, bearing the signature of Donald M'Vurrich, one of the Clanronald bards, written about 1720. As to the reading of this character, an old gentleman who lived in the neighbourhood of Inverness about 50 years ago, used to say that he remembered the Irish Bible being used from the desk in the parish church of Kirkhill, in the same neighbourhood, by the catechist of the parish, every Sabbath-day as the regular service commenced. Still this was not a satisfactory state of matters, for the Irish Gaelic was to the Highlander in a measure a foreign tongue. Accordingly, about the year 1760, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge resolved upon having a translation of the Scriptures made into the Scottish Gaelic. This work was intrusted to the Rev. James Stewart of Killin, an accomplished Gaelic scholar; and in the year 1767 appeared the first edition of a

Gaelic New Testament. The writer has in his possession a considerable portion of the original MS. of this translation, indicating very distinctly the care exercised by the translator, and his remarkable accuracy. This work, although somewhat tinged with Irish idioms, was most cordially and gratefully received, and obtained the approbation of all the Gaelic scholars in the country. Mr Stewart commenced afterwards the translation of the Old Testament, but did not proceed far with it. His design was carried out by his son, the Rev. Dr Stewart of Luss, along with the Rev. Dr Smith of Campbellton, and the Gaelic Scriptures were printed complete in the year 1801 ; several sections having been printed previously during the course of translation. No man can tell to what an extent the inhabitants of the Highlands are indebted to this work ; to say the least, we owe to it the high state of morals existing among our Highland population. There is perhaps no other portion of the globe on which we live in which both life and property are held in higher respect, or enjoyed in greater security.

A large number of translations of various kinds have appeared within the last hundred years. Of these it is hardly necessary to speak, Many of the authors have succeeded in convey-

ing the meaning of the originals in Gaelic with accuracy and skill; others have done neither themselves nor their mother-tongue much credit. In most of them the orthography is very irregular, and seldom correct. It is painful to see the mangling of the language by an imperfect and blundering orthography. A few original works have appeared within the period indicated. The "Bliadhna Thearlaich" of M'Kenzie is an excellent specimen of pithy idiomatic Gaelic; and lately there has appeared a little work on astronomy, by Mr D. M. Connel of Aberdeen, which is highly creditable both to the scientific and literary acquirements of the author, and shows that the Gaelic could very readily be converted into a vehicle for communicating the truths of science. Various periodicals have also appeared—as the "Teachdair Gaidhealach," edited by the Rev. Dr M'Leod of Glasgow; and "Cuairtear nan gleann," by the same editor—both of them such as might be expected from Dr M'Leod's well-known familiarity with the Gaelic language, and his remarkable talent of writing it with vivacity and force; and the "Fianuis," edited by the Rev. Dr Mackay, late of Dunoon, distinguished by Dr Mackay's peculiar accuracy in writing the language, in which he has few

equals. It is somewhat humbling to patriotic Highlanders that none of these periodicals has enjoyed anything beyond a very short-lived and most precarious existence. How different from Wales, where no less than twelve weekly newspapers are published in the Cymric language.

When we turn to the Gaelic poetry of the last two centuries, a much wider field opens up to us. We have poetical compositions so numerous as to be sufficient to fill volumes. In examining critically modern Highland poetry, it is but fair that we should carry along with us the recollection of the peculiar circumstances in which the authors of most of it were. Let it be remembered that the great body of them were men of the class of labourers or artisans; at least few of them were independent of their manual labour in obtaining their subsistence; and, besides, many of them were altogether uneducated. M'Intyre of Glenorchy, as well as many others who might be named, could neither read nor write. This is not indeed the case with all. Alexander Macdonald was the son of a clergyman, and had consequently the elements of a good education. Ross of Gairloch was a parochial schoolmaster; both of these men knew Latin, and perhaps their poetry would have lost nothing if they did not.

Their heathen gods and goddesses,—Bacchus, Cupid, Phœbus, Venus, &c., look marvellously out of place in their otherwise fine Gaelic compositions. Most of our Highland poets, however, were men of no education, and were derived from the peasantry of the country; and while this should have some modifying influence on our criticism, it brings out very remarkably the character of that peasantry. Where shall we find another people among whose peasantry such a literature can be found? There are at this moment scores of volumes extant containing poetical compositions,—and many of them truly poetical,—the composition of men belonging to the peasantry of the Scottish Highlands. It is not claiming too much for this portion of our countrymen when we say, that with respect to those elements of national character which lead men to indulge in and appreciate poetry, the peasantry of the Highlands hold a place higher than that either of England or the Scottish Lowlands, although the latter are perhaps in advance of the peasantry of almost every other country but their own. Burns, the type of the Scottish Lowland bards, was however possessed of advantages far beyond those of his Celtic brethren. His letters indicate the man of thoroughly educated mind.

It may be asked how it happens that our Highland poetry is confined to the peasantry, and is not cultivated to any extent by the upper classes? The reason is obvious. Such of these last as write, write in the English language. English is the national tongue, and is the language in use among educated men. Fame is associated with writing in English; and since the fifteenth century, when an Earl of Breadalbane and Countess of Argyll wrote Gaelic poetry, the practice has been in disuse among our higher classes. Were the literature of the Highlands to embrace all that has been written, either in prose or poetry, by Highlanders, our list of distinguished writers would be largely increased. In prose we could claim George Buchanan, a man that has shed no ordinary lustre on his native Scotland; we could claim Sir George M'Kenzie, a name of no great repute with a large class of the Scottish people, but a man of high literary taste, and the founder of the Edinburgh Advocates' Library; we could claim Principal Robertson, one of the Clann Donnchaidh, or Perthshire Robertsons; we could claim Sir James Mackintosh—a true Celt—his father being a Mackintosh, and his mother a Macgillivray; and we could claim Thomas Babington Macaulay, no lover of the

Celts, yet a man out of whose veins all the water in the ocean could not wash the Celtic blood they contain. In poetry we could lay claim to Mallet, originally a MacGregor, which name his family had laid aside under the Proscription Act; we could claim Thomas Campbell, who loved his native land; we could claim Hector M'Neill and Mrs Grant Laggan; and here we meet Thomas Macaulay again, whose "Lays of Rome" will live as long as the English language. These are Highland authors, though they wrote in the language of the Anglo-Saxon. It is the language of polite literature; and the ancient tongue of the Celt is left to the unlettered but often brilliant muse of the peasant.

We must, however, confine our notices to the Gaelic bards. Their compositions may be divided into several classes.—political, religious, and lyrical pieces on subjects common to the bards of all nations, satires, elegies, &c. Of the political school, the most remarkable poet the Highlands have produced was John Macdonell, commonly called "Eoin Lòm," the Bard of Keppoch. He lived during the stormy period of the Commonwealth, and entered warmly into the political questions of his day in the Highlands. Like the chief of Kep-

poch, the head of his family, he was a strenuous partisan of the House of Stuart, and did as much for their interest in the north by his muse as was accomplished by any other influence brought to bear upon the popular mind. He was a Roman Catholic, and his religion combined with his politics in giving a bias to his views, and force and point to his verses. Macaulay, in his "History of England," has endeavoured to represent the Highland clans which were engaged in the great national conflict of the seventeenth century, as actuated by nothing save the miserable motives arising out of, and inseparable from, clan animosities. He maintains that the Highlanders engaged in that conflict were utterly indifferent to the principles involved, and sought for nothing but to satiate their malice by taking vengeance on their feudal enemies, and better their circumstances by spoiling their neighbours. This is a mistake. The same principles were felt to be involved in the Highlands as throughout the rest of the kingdom. The Argyll family, whom Macaulay represents as being the special objects of animosity to their neighbours, were the supporters of certain great principles of national policy both in church and state: they were the Whigs of the Highlands; the friends

and supporters of civil and religious liberty. The neighbouring clans to the north of these, throughout Lochaber and the surrounding districts, were the abettors of an entirely different policy. They were almost uniformly Roman Catholics, and the friends of unlimited monarchial government. Their religion might have perhaps been the principal element in the formation of their policy, but they had a policy; and the sympathies of the poorest clansman were, so far as that policy was concerned, at one with those of the chief. The time is not long gone past when, among the Highland peasantry, the justice of the claims of the family of Stuart to the throne of Great Britain was wont to be stoutly maintained. Among the abettors of these claims none was more zealous than Eoin Lòm, the Bard of Keppoch; so much so, indeed, that Charles II. appointed him a sort of Poet-Laureat for Scotland, and conferred upon him a small pension, which it is said he enjoyed till the period of his death. Many of his Jacobite compositions have been handed down to us, and are now in print. In these, two things are remarkable: his fierce appeals to the passions of the clans favourable to the royal cause, and his equally violent denunciation of those opposed to it. His enmity to the Clan Campbell is of

the most cordial kind, as exhibited in the epithets he applies to them, and in the savage joy he expresses over their defeat and severe losses at the battle of Inverlochy. It is said that, being on one occasion at Inverary Castle, protected by the sacred character of a bard, he met the Marquis of Argyll, who showed him much attention and kindness, and brought him to see many objects of interest in the neighbourhood of the castle. Among other things, he pointed out a number of dead ravens hung up by the huntsmen as trophies of their skill, and asked the bard if he ever saw so much dead vermin before. "Yes, my Lord," replied the resolute bard. "Where?" asked the Marquis. "At Inverlochy, my Lord," said John, referring to the Campbells slain there. "Strange, John," said the Marquis, "that you can never cease chewing* the Campbells. What evil have they done you?" "I only regret," replied the bard, "that I cannot swallow them as well." Here is a specimen of his invective :—

Air leth taobh Beinne bhuidhe
Sheas a bhuidheann nach gann
Luchd dhearcadh an iubhair
'Sa chur siubhal fo chrann

* A strong Gaelic expression for vituperating.

'S diombach mise d'ur saothair
'N uair a dh' aom sibh a nall
Nach deach a steach air Gleann Aoraidh
'Ghearradh bhraoisg nam beul càm.

It is needless to attempt a literal translation of these lines; but in the way of interpretation it may be said that the poet expresses the most poignant regret that the Athole-men, in their raid into Argyllshire, did not pillage Glenaray, and gratify both themselves and him by widening, probably with their dirks, the already wry mouths of the resident Campbells, the Marquis included, as we may believe.

The poet's admiration for Montrose was excessive. He begins one of his pieces with these lines—

Slàu gun dith dhuit a Mharcuis
Direach maiseach gun chromadh
Dà shuil ghorm fo d'chaol mhala
Nach d'fhàs gu balachail bronnach.

These lines are descriptive of the personal beauty of Montrose, who is said to have been erect and finely formed, with blue eyes looking out from under well-shaped eyebrows. Macdonell could compose on other subjects as well as political ones. His elegy on the murdered children of the chief of Keppoch is a composition of striking power and pathos. These chil-

dren, three in number, were put to death by their uncle and cousins on their return from France, where, like many of the children of Highland chiefs, they had been sent for their education. The object of the murderers was the succession to the lands of the young chief. This event fired the soul of the poet, and he sung the horrors of the scene until he roused such a measure of public indignation, that the criminals were brought to condign punishment by a neighbouring chieftain invested with royal authority.

Another composer of political songs was John Roy Stewart, a descendant of the ancient Barons of Kincardine in Inverness-shire. Stewart flourished in the middle of last century, and was deeply involved in the rising of the clans in 1745. He was a violent man, but a man of genius, both as a soldier and a poet. Some of his compositions have been translated into English verse, and are given in Dr Rogers' "Modern Scottish Minstrel." The translation is made with skill and success, considering the difficulties which the task involved, arising from the wide difference existing between the genius of the two languages and the character of their respective poetry. The following lines are from Stewart's piece composed on the defeat of the

Highlanders at Culloden, and are quoted from Dr Roger's translation :—

Ah ! the wound of my heart, my heart sinks to the dust,
And the rain-drops of sorrow are watering the ground ;
So impassive to hear, never pierces my ear,
Or briskly, or slowly, the music of sound ;
For what tidings can charm, while emotion is warm
With the thought of my Prince on his travel unknown.
The royal in blood by misfortune subdued,
While the base-born by hosts is secured on the throne.
Of the hound is the race that has wrought our disgrace,
Yet the boast of the litter of mongrels is small ;
Not the arm of your might makes a boast of our flight,
But the musters that failed at the moment of call.
Five banners were furled, that might challenge the world
Of their silk not a pennon was spread to the day.
Where is Cromarty's Earl, the fearless in peril ?
Young Barisdale's following M'Kinnon's array ;
Where the sons of the glen, Clan Gregor, in vain,
That never were hailed to the carnage of war ?
Where M'Vurrich, the child of victory styled ?
How we sighed when we learned that his host was afar.
Clan Dònuil, my bosom friends, now that the blossom
That crests your proud standard for once disappeared,
Nor marshalled your march when your princely deserts,
Without stain might the cause of the right have uppreared

The composition continues in the same strain, and indicates how deeply the partisans of the Stewart cause felt the failure of their effort. Stewart was firmly convinced of the treachery of Lord George Murray, and attributes to it the

success of the English. The following verse shows pretty plainly how he felt:—

Ma's fior an dàn g'a cheann
Gun robh Achan 's a chàmp
Dearg mheirleach nan raud 's nam breugan.
Se sin an Seanalair mo
Gràin is mallachd an t-sloigh
Reic e onoir 's a choir air eucoir.—

meaning that there was an Achan in the camp of the Prince,—a lying treacherous thief,—a General indeed, but worthy of execration as having exchanged truth and honour for the wages of iniquity. The after history of Lord George does not go to confirm Stewart's suspicions. No doubt the position of the Highland army at Culloden was taken up with little reference to what the character of that army rendered essential in such a case. Every facility was given to the movements of cavalry and artillery, those military arms in which Cumberland was strong, and they weak; and yet there might be good reason for it all. It is questionable whether, after their night's march to Nairn, the Highland troops could bear the additional toil of a longer march next day. There was, besides, every probability of a farther retreat being tantamount to a route. Stewart denounces the Duke of Cumberland with much bitterness:—

'S gum bi Uilliam MacDheorsa
Mar chraoibh gun duilleach fo leon
Gun fhreumh gun mheangan gun mheoirean géige.
Gum a lóm bhitheas do leac,
Gun bhean, gun mhathair, gun mhac,
Gun fhuaim clársaich, gun lasair chéire.

"May William, the son of George, be as a leafless splintered tree, rootless, branchless, sproutless. May there be no joy on his hearth, no wife, no brother, no son, no sounding harp or blazing wax." Stewart is said to have composed a fine elegy on one of the ladies of Mackintosh, a daughter of Menzies of Castle Menzies, who is said to have been a fervent partisan of the Stuart cause. This elegy has been attributed to a poet of the name of Davidson, in the neighbourhood of Moyhall, the seat of the Lairds of Mackintosh. Judging by a number of verses on the Macgillivrays of Dunmaglass by this Davidson, there is no reason to doubt his capability of composing the elegy on Lady Mackintosh, although it is one of the finest things in the Gaelic language. The elegy is certainly not in the usual style of Roy Stewart.

Another Jacobite poet was Alexander Macdonald, already referred to, son of a Macdonald, who was Episcopal minister of Slate in Skye. Macdonáld was a warm supporter of the Stewarts; indeed, on their account he

changed his religion and became a Roman Catholic. He is a poet of real power, though much more artificial than either John Macdonell or Roy Stewart. His continued allusions to the classical mythology in his poems is a blemish in the eyes of every reader of taste. It is merely made a means of displaying the poet's learning, which may not have been very extensive after all. A specimen of his Jacobite poetry taken from Dr Roger's translation, follows:—

Glad tidings for the Highlands—
To arms a ringing call,
Hammers storming, targets forming,
Orb-like as a ball.
Withers dismay, the pale array
That guards the Hanoverian,
Assurance sure the sea comes o'er,
The help is nigh we weary on ;
From friendly east a breeze shall haste,
The fruit freight of our prayer,
With thousands wight in baldrick white,
A prince to do and dare.
Stuart's his name, his sire's the same,
For his rifled crown appealing,
Strong his right is, soon shall Britain
Be humbled to the kneeling.
Strength never quelled, and sword and shield
And fire-arms play defiance, &c.

There were many other Jacobite poets of less note besides these, whom our limits do not per-

mit us to embrace in our notices. It cannot be doubted that these all exercised a powerful influence on the minds of their countrymen, and did much to excite and maintain their interest in the Stuart cause. If a man well acquainted with his native country could say of it, "Let any man make her laws, but let me make her songs, and I will govern her people," can it be supposed that these songs, full of the warmest patriotic sentiment and the keenest partizanship, and accompanied with the fire of a vigorous and pointed versification, could have anything but the most potent influence on the popular mind of the Highlands. The Jacobite cause owed more to these bards than is generally acknowledged, or even known. It may not be uninteresting to some of our readers to have placed in juxtaposition with these compositions of the Scottish Highlanders a specimen of the Jacobite poetry of the native Irish. The following is a poem called "Fàiltiughadh Righ Searluis," or "Welcome to King Charles," by William Dall O Heffernan (William Heffernan the Blind). It proceeds in Irish Gaelic:—

A Phadraic nan árrann ! a g-cluin tú na garrtha
A g-cluinir an plé-ráca an siosmadh 's an gleo ?
Ar chualais mar thainidh go coige Ulladh an ghárda,
Thurot na shláinte le iomarcadh sgóip !

Preab ! bidh ad sheasamh ! glac meanmnadh's bioga'nois
Griosaicc na seabhaic-si a t-aice chum spóirt
Beidheadh puicidhe da séide le cloidheamh's le faobhair
'S racham a n-einfheacht faoi bhrataibh ár leóghain.

Eisdicc a Ghaodhail-bhoicht 'ta cráidhte 'ge meirlicc
Glacaicc bhur d-tréan-airm gaisge ann bhur n-dóide
Bioch *Hurrah* go súgach ! anois a ta an prionnsa
'Sa ghàrdaighe go dúbaltadh ag tarraing ion-bhúr g-cóir.

Hurroo gan dochmadh ! bioch deoch ar an m-bord agaibh
Suigídhe go sochmadh le soilibhios ceoil ?
Ta 'n báire ag ár muintir 's an la 'co ar an namhaide
'S go bráth beith ar saoithe ag imirt 's ag ól.

Ata 'n Ruta sa laidir mas fior gach a ràidhtear,
An crobhaire ceann-àrd 'sa bhuime gan bhrón ;
Seoirse go lán-lag-'s *Cumberland* cráidhte,
Pitt 'san *Parliament* caite ar a d-tóin.

Na *Heelans* da d-tarraint faoi phlaidibh na d-trúpannaibh
'Sa b-piobanadh fada da spreaga chum ceoil
Rainnce ar gach maol-chnoc-le h-áthus na sgléipe
Ag cur failt roimh Shearlus a bhaile 'na chróinn.

As e'n righ-rádh dàirire é-an plé-raca, 'san t-aoibhneas,
Au sgéal breàgh ra innsint faid mhairfiom gach ló ;
Na cobaicc go claoidhte-gan foith'in gan fíonta,
Gan ceoltadh gan saoithe, gan bailte gan lón ?

Raobaicc gach Gall-phoc—leagaicc's rúsgaicc iad
Cuiridh as talamh bhúr n-aithreach an chóip,
Ta Seoirse 'sa mhuintír go brónach lag claoidhte
S 'croinn na d-trí rióghachda ni casaid go deo !

This poem has been translated as follows by the late James C. Mangan of Dublin, perhaps the most successful translator of Gaelic poetry who has attempted it. The translation is taken from O'Daly's "Poets and Poetry of Munster":—

O Patrick, my friend, have you heard the commotion,
The clangour, the shouting, so lately gone forth;
The troops have come over the blue-billowed ocean,
And Thurot commands in the camp of the North.

Up, up, to your post! one of glory and danger;
Our legions must now neither falter nor fail,
We'll chase from the island the hosts of the stranger,
Led on by the conquering Prince of the Gael!

And you, my poor countrymen, trampled for ages,
Grasp each of you now his sharp sword in his hand!
The war that Prince Charlie so valiantly wages,
Is one that will shatter the chains of our land.

Hurrah for our leader! Hurrah for Prince Charlie!
Give praise to his efforts with music and song;
Our nobles will now in the juice of the barley
Carouse to his victories all the day long.

Rothe marshalls his brave-hearted forces to waken
The soul of the nation to combat and dare;
While Georgy is feeble, and Cumberland shaken,
And Parliament gnashes its teeth in despair.

The lads with the dirks, from the hills of the Highlands,
Are marching with pibroch and shout to the field;

And Charlie, Prince Charlie, the King of the Island,
Will force the usurping old German to yield.

O! this is the joy, this the revel in earnest,
The story to tell to the ends of the earth,
That our youths have uprisen, resolving with sternest
Intention to fight for the land of their birth.

We will drive out the stranger from green-valleyed Erin,
King George and his crew will be scarce in the land,
And the crown of this kingdom shall he alone wear in
The Islands,—our Prince, the man born to command!

The following lines are from another Irish Jacobite song. We give only the translation :—

And O! the deep gloom of my wild throbbing heart,
That men, who should die to avenge her,
See fair Erin smitten, evicted, oppressed,
In chains of the treacherous stranger.
And O! that the doom of the tyrant were come,
And the salt drops were dried that now fall free,
And a proud nation's force could procure a divorce
From the dull plodding plunderer, "Shane Buy."*

Is it any wonder, that with such poetry circulating freely among the people and recited in every hamlet, Ireland should be what it is ; and yet the vast mass of the current popular poetry of the native Irish is of this character—pervaded by the most intense hatred of England

* "Shane Buy" is a soubriquet by which the native Irish designate the English,—it means "Yellow John."

and English domination ; and this without our statesmen being aware that such an influence exists, and that they have to contend with its force. Perhaps nowhere does a more remarkable scene present itself to the student of national character, and the influences that mould it, than in opening any one of the numerous volumes we have of native Irish poetry. How few know of their existence ; and yet there is reason to believe that not a little of what has, with reference to Ireland, been laid at the door of the priesthood, might with equal justice be attributed to her native poets. These have not only reflected the national sentiment, but they have been the means largely of making and keeping that sentiment what it is.

The religious poetry of the Highlands presents to us a subject of interesting observation and inquiry, inasmuch as it is closely linked with their religious history. The principles of the Reformation took early root in the Highlands : nor is the descent of the Highland host among the Covenanters of Ayrshire and the West of Scotland any proof to the contrary. The Reformed faith entered many portions of the country simultaneously with the Lowlands. Many of the leading families adopted it, and the large body of their

people,—some from conviction, and others from perhaps less worthy motives,—followed them. In the reign of Queen Mary, Protestantism was firmly established in Argyll and the Isles, aided in all likelihood by the influence of the Argyll family, yet as strenuously opposed, as we know from authentic sources, by other powerful Highland families. Carsewell was superintendent of Argyll and the Isles in 1567. Among the earliest supporters of the cause of Protestantism were the family of Sutherland, the family of Reay, the Munroes of Fowlis, the Roses of Kilravock, and the Grants of Grant. On the territories of all these powerful families the people joined their leaders; and a great Protestant party was formed in the Highlands at the very dawn of the Reformation. There are remains of religious poetry in Gaelic of that period. In Carsewell's little volume, besides some lines of his own, we have "Faosid Eoin Stiubhart na h-Apuin." ("The Confession of John Stewart of Appin.") This is a metrical prayer including a confession of sin. This laird of Appin seems to have been a Protestant; although that was not the side the family usually took. We have in Carsewell's volume also a metrical edition of the Ten Commandments, and several other similar pieces. In the following

century appeared, as already observed, the metrical translation of the Psalms; and although we have no record of them, it is probable that numerous other compositions were produced. In the eighteenth century, and especially towards its close, religious poetry became abundant. The popular mind was obviously undergoing a great change, and that not merely in one section of the Highlands, but throughout the whole territory. M'Kellar composed his hymn on Loch Fine-side; Buchanan composed his beautiful and touching odes in Rannoch; and the Mathesons and several others composed in Sutherland; while other districts of the country produced their own hymnists of real worth, though not perhaps of equal fame. The spirit of Jacobitism throughout the Highlands passed into a different—we would say a better—spirit, and the popular poetry which would at one time have been directed to the stiring up of every fierce and angry passion, became the channel for conveying into the hearts of men the hopes and consolations of religion. Much of the later poetry of the Highlands is of this religious type, and may, as observed, be taken as an indication of the state of the popular mind.

One thing is remarkable about the poetry of

the Highlands,—it possesses little satire. It has abundance of very hearty and very violent abuse, but not much real satire. Macintyre of Glenorchy, though unequalled in his descriptive poetry, fails entirely when he attempts the satirical. It has been remarked with truth, that in such attempts he never rises above the level of mere vulgar abuse. There is, however, one satire in the language of remarkable point and pungency: it is by Mackay (Rob Dónn), the Reay bard, and is designated "Marbh rann Eoin Ghré," or "An Elegy on John Gray." Mr Gray was one of the lairds of Criech, and apparently no favourite of the poet,—why, I have not heard. It would seem as if the family were unpopular; and certainly, in singing the memory of this worthy, the bard is very far from being complimentary. He describes the grief of all the scoundrels in the country over the loss of their chief, in the most pathetic terms, and represents the great enemy of mankind as, for once, regretting that the prey had fallen into his hands, inasmuch as, on Gray's removal, he had no suitable successor to fill his place on the earth. The whole piece is worthy of Horace. Mackay excels many of the other poets in this faculty, and in it alone.

In descriptive poetry the Gaelic abounds.

Alexander Macdonald, M'Intyre, Mackay, and a host of others, excel in this kind of composition ; and this is just what might be looked for. The country in which these men lived is one in which the natural objects are marked and prominent: mountains, lakes, waterfalls, glens, and islands abound. There is everything to excite the descriptive muse, and it has been excited among the Highland peasantry to a remarkable extent. Some of Macintyre's odes are of rare excellency. In versification he is a master ; his fund of appropriate language is inexhaustible ; and he abounds in the richest imagery, which he uses with remarkable skill. It is difficult to believe that this man could neither read nor write. His case is another testimony to the power of memory. It is perfectly marvellous how he could retain his own compositions, some of which extend to many hundred lines in the most varied kinds of versification. Alexander Macdonald is also an able descriptive poet. His ode in praise of Morrar, a district in which he spent some years of his life, is a fine specimen of this kind of composition.

In ordinary lyrical poetry the Gaelic is sufficiently rich. Ross of Gairloch has produced several songs of first-rate excellence, and in high repute among his countrymen. So long as a

poet is true to Nature he can hardly fail in exciting interest. This would seem to be the great secret of art, although there are not wanting those who maintain that the object of art is to improve on Nature. Judging by the success of Ross, Nature would seem to be a safe guide for the poet; for, by his lyrics, which are eminently true to Nature, he has achieved a remarkable popularity among his countrymen. But it is not needful here, nor was it the object of the writer, to discuss matters with which most of those who have any acquaintance with the Highlands are sufficiently familiar, and on which anything that can be said may be found in many of our ordinary collections of Highland poetry. This field has been thoroughly gleaned already, and there is little left that is of much value. At the same time, ere leaving it, it may be said, that if any man desires to be thoroughly acquainted with the Gaelic language he must study its poetry. He will find, no doubt, among the bards a good deal of sameness, arising from a deficient education, and the limited sphere in which they moved. He will find a great redundancy of epithets, which would seem to be a sort of weakness confined entirely to modern compositions; but he will find also a great deal of true poetry, and an admirable adaptation of

a language, naturally rich and vigorous, to the purposes of poetical composition.

In bringing these Lectures to a close, there are one or two points which are worthy of some notice in connection with the history and literature of our Highlands. And first of all, it is eminently desirable that a somewhat new system should be adopted in studying this subject. The author does not feel himself warranted in becoming a censor, nor does he intend to assume the character; but he believes that most intelligent Highlanders will agree with him when he says, that much of what has been written on this subject has been more a matter of speculation than research, and perhaps that speculation, considering how little was offered to support it, was of a somewhat too boastful character. Little is gained for a cause by maintaining over-high pretensions on its behalf; and the cause of Highland literature has suffered somewhat from this. Perhaps it may have been provoked by the loudness and groundlessness of the assertions on the other side. If the writer might be allowed to make a suggestion, it is, that Celtic scholars should deal chiefly with research. The antiquities of the country present an ample field; and there are few districts where something may not be gleaned. Facts con-

nected with these are to be gathered, not merely from the traditions of the people, but from existing monuments, and from a judiciously interpreted topography. The ecclesiastical antiquities of the Highlands are of the highest interest, and have never been made a subject of well-directed research. Irish scholars are, indeed, at this moment doing much for them, and are entitled to the cordial sympathy and support of Scotch Highlanders. But Highlanders themselves have advantages over even Irishmen in the field. They are more familiar with and know more thoroughly their own dialect, and are more intimately acquainted with the traditions that float from generation to generation among the people ; besides having certain sympathies which are very needful in dealing with such matters, and the absence, or the opposite of which, often leads inquirers astray. The ecclesiastical history of the Highlands has never been written. From the very planting of Christianity in the land it had features peculiar to itself, and differing from those which characterized the Lowlands. In every period of its history,—even at this day,—the Christianity of the Highlands was and is characterized by peculiarities of its own; and to have its history fairly before us would require that it should be written

separately. Scottish church history hitherto has just been that of the Scottish Lowlands. There is, perhaps, no more interesting field of research than that which Highland church history presents. May we not hope that some one having the time and the inclination may soon be found entering upon it.

Another of our points has reference to the Gaelic language. Its philological importance cannot be over-rated, and has hardly been rightly estimated by British scholars. German scholars are doing much for its elucidation; and it is hardly creditable to the scholarship of Britain, that we should be indebted to Germany for such a work as "Zeuss' Celtic Grammar." British scholars, indeed, would seem to look down from their high altitude with a feeling somewhat akin to contempt on the Celtic tongues.* Whether this is to be attributed to high attainments in the field of philology, or rather to the

* In a paper recently prepared by the Scottish Literary Institute, on the State of our University Chairs, a list is presented of those languages for the study of which new chairs are demanded. These embrace the Teutonic and the Romanesque!! but the Celtic is entirely ignored, although spoken by four millions of the inhabitants of the British Islands, and more closely allied than any other of the primitive European tongues with the language of Greece and Rome. Is there not as much spirit in our Highlanders themselves, at home or abroad, as would endow one or two chairs in our Universities?

opposite, we will not undertake to say; but we cannot imagine that philology would not be in some degree a gainer by the study of this class of languages. It is perhaps true that the study has been put in a wrong position by the claims of some of our would-be Celtic scholars themselves. If the Gaelic were the language of Eden it cannot but be a source of satisfaction to the people who speak it now; but until they can present some more satisfactory evidence of it than any produced yet, they had as well say nothing about it, inasmuch as the common sense of the rest of mankind is very likely to be outraged, and to avenge itself by meeting even the truth with a sneer. If Celtic scholars would keep to the historical period, and bring their scholarship to bear on the real elucidation of the Celtic tongues, they would be doing their country a service, and could not but command the respect of all men of literary taste and acquirement.

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